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LADY HENRY SOMERSET



LADY HENRY SOMERSET

Frontispiece

Lady Henry Somerset

BY
KATHLEEN FITZPATRICK

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS



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TO HER SON
SOMERS SOMERSET, *Esq.*

“It is the truth which makes men
free, but the highest truth is love.”

PREFACE

LADY HENRY SOMERSET made me her literary executor and all the letters and papers she had kept were given to me after her death. Among them were many that had belonged to her mother, Lady Somers, who seems rarely to have destroyed a letter that came into her hands; those she had written to her children and her husband were preserved by her wish and returned to her, and the collection was known in the family as "the Archives." Lady Henry had intended to look through these but had not found time to do so.

"The Archives" gave me most of the material for the earlier part of the biography. Every letter or paper quoted, up to and including the time of Lady Henry's separation from her husband, was in Lady Somers's possession and had been preserved, not by Lady Henry herself but by her mother.

KATHLEEN FITZPATRICK



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Lady Henry Somerset

CHAPTER I

THE NURSERY

ISABELLA SOMERS COCKS was born at 45 Grosvenor Gardens, London, on the third of August, 1851.

She was the first child of a romantic love marriage and came into the world with a far larger share of the joy of being alive in it than most people bring with them.

If she had had a choice of her home and surroundings before she came she could hardly have chosen a better setting for her gay, warm-hearted, beauty-loving and pleasure-loving nature.

Her destiny included so many of this world's good things that there seems to have been nothing left out, — aristocratic birth, personal beauty and charm of manner, the position of an heiress to a great estate, devoted parents, an array of affectionate aunts all distinguished either for intelligence, beauty, or goodness, and the society and

friendship of some of the most interesting people in the social world and in the world of art and literature, both in England and in France.

But if it had been her intention to choose the good things of this world and enjoy them with her abundant vitality, she made a mistake in adding to them "a talent for humanity." "An extraordinary fine delicate scent for pain in general . . . the power of reflecting in one's soul the suffering of others": this is Tchekhov's description of that rare gift. But her talent for humanity was to go deeper than compassion for pain and suffering, and give her a fine delicate scent for happiness in general, the power of reflecting in herself the delight and laughter of others. To every piping in the market place her heart should dance.

In the Victorian world to which Lady Isabel was born this was a dangerous quality for a young lady of noble birth, and it was to prove fatal to the life for which every other gift and endowment of her birthright had fitted her.

Even as a child her face had an odd questioning look that came from the slightly irregular line of her eyebrows. Later in life this "uplift of the eyebrows", as one of her lovers called it, and the wonderful quality of her laugh and her voice in speaking, came to be associated in the minds

of her friends with what was most characteristic of her outlook on her world.

Behind her stretched a long line of respectable, occasionally distinguished, purely English ancestors who could never have accounted for her vivid personality; that came through her mother from France. But the Bishop-Chancellor-Soldier strain of Somers Cocks gave balance to the romantic French strain.

Her French great-grandfather, the Chevalier Antoine de l'Étang, had been one of Queen Marie Antoinette's pages. He was with the Queen in the prison of the Conciergerie, and when she said good-bye to him she gave him her miniature. After her death the French Government hesitated over the necessity of cutting off the head of the Queen's page, and in the end decided to be merciful and banish him and his young wife — who had been one of the Queen's ladies — to French Pondicherry. Here they settled, and after the surrender of Pondicherry the Chevalier, his wife and daughters, removed to Ghazipur. There one daughter married Mr. James Pattle, a rich Bengal merchant.

Mr. James Pattle was more than a rich merchant; his enemies and their children after him knew him as "the biggest liar in India." His

friends, more mildly, called him "Jim Blazes." If his force of character lost anything in its descent to his daughters it must have been tremendous in himself, for in them self-will had the impetus of Niagara. There were seven daughters born of this marriage, Adeline, Julia, Mia, Sara, Sophie, Louisa, and Virginia.

Adeline, a gentle beautiful creature, married and died young and only comes into this story as the grandmother of Blanche Clogston. Julia became Mrs. Cameron, the celebrated photographer, friend of Tennyson and of every other celebrity of her day. Mia became Mrs. John Jackson. Sara became Mrs. Thoby Prinsep and mother of Alice Gurney, who was mother of Rachel, afterwards Countess of Dudley, and of Laura, afterwards Lady Troubridge. Sophie became Mrs. Dalrymple, her daughter Virginia was the "Virgie" of this story. Louisa as Mrs. Bailey does not reappear.

The youngest daughter was Virginia.

The Chevalier de l'Étang died and was buried at Ghazipur with the miniature of his Queen on his breast. Madame de l'Étang after his death went back to France, where she lived at Versailles until 1866, when she died at the age of ninety-eight. Mr. James Pattle also died in India.

By this time some of his daughters were married and some of these were living in London. Mrs. Pattle with her two youngest daughters sailed for Europe taking with her, in a cask of spirits of wine, her husband's body. There was a terrible storm at sea and the ship's cargo was dashed about in the hold. When the storm passed Mrs. Pattle's strange luggage was found to have suffered. The end had been wrenched off the cask and Mr. Pattle was standing up in it grim and terrible. The captain insisted on Mrs. Pattle going down with him to the hold to identify the body. To a man hardened by the danger of those seas and probably nourished on salt pork and rum there need have been nothing alarming in such a sight, but the sensitive French lady died of the horror of it and was buried with her husband's body at sea.

Virginia came to live with her sister Mrs. Thoby Prinsep in London. All the Pattle sisters, so different in appearance, nature and fortune, had this family characteristic — they were devoted to each other. Each one of them developed her ten talents in her own way, but a love of beauty in colour and form they all seem to have expressed in a passion for dress. They scorned Fashion, wore neither crinoline nor stays, and in long flow-

ing garments designed and made by themselves they walked serenely like goddesses through the London streets.

Mr. Watts first saw Virginia Pattle in a "long grey cloak falling in beautiful lines against her tall figure." A grand-niece remembers a Pattle aunt wearing "a scarlet Turkey twill toga bound with dull gold braid, over an olive green soft satin under-robe with puffed sleeves, and an Indian shawl trailing over all."

Amongst themselves the sisters talked in Hindustani, and when they met together at one or other of their houses they generally sat up all night in an orgy of dressmaking, pulling their robes to bits and sewing them up in a new way, or designing and cutting out new clothes, chattering all the time in Hindustani, that seemed to an outsider the language best suited to express their superabundant vitality.

Julia Cameron, Sophie Prinsep and Virginia were perhaps the most perfect blend of both their parents, passionate, wilful, "headstrong as a Pattle," brilliant or beautiful; everything in their nature, even their mother's sensitiveness and imaginativeness, seems to have been touched by the "blazing" quality of their father.

Each one of them married and eclipsed a dis-

tinguished man. They were good wives, devoted mothers, loved and admired always by these patient men. The Scotch tongue of Julia's husband, Charles Hay Cameron of Lochiel, left the only record of criticism: "those three women are like tigers where their offspring are concerned." This long-suffering man watched his estates in Ceylon disappear bit by bit to pay for his wife's recklessly generous and extravagant schemes. Nothing could stem the tide of Pattle extravagance, and when she was inspired to fresh activity he would say, "Julia is slicing up Ceylon." All three sisters could have sliced up a continent without fatigue.

Though Virginia was not the only beauty of the family, she was the most celebrated for her loveliness. While she was still only a girl she became the rage among the young gentlemen of the day. With a heart full of kindness she waded patiently through the odes that rained on her till, being an intelligent young person, she was bored to death with their foolish praises of her beauty. At this stage Henry Taylor presented his ode, and it proved too much for her. She read it and then burst into tears. "They all say that, nothing but that," she said.

This gossip came to Thackeray's ears and

pleased him so well that he added to her fame a paper in *Punch*, "On a good-looking young lady." But either Virginia had a soul above fame or no one dared to tell her of Thackeray's praise; she did not hear of this tribute till she was an old woman, though Thackeray had been her friend for years.

One of the many young men who admired her spoke of her beauty to Mr. G. F. Watts and begged him to come and see for himself. Mr. Watts refused. He had no time to spare, he said, and had no intention of making new acquaintances.

Possibly Mr. Watts, like other people, preferred to discover beauty for himself and not have it pointed out by the finger of an officious friend. But not long after, walking in the street, he met a rare and lovely creature in flowing garments, guessed who she must be, and changed his intention of making no new acquaintances.

If he had created her she could not have been more to his taste. He seems to have found in her his Divine Archetype of Woman. One of his early portraits of her was hung in the Academy Exhibition of 1849.

Miss Virginia was more beautiful than this portrait, and there is nothing in the gentle pose, the

mild face, loosely clasped hands and soft drooping lines of the grey cloak, that gives any hint of the force of character behind that meek exterior.

Far more like her was the chalk drawing done by Mr. Watts in 1851, showing the perfect oval of the face, the heavy lids drooping over the eyes and the firmly modelled throat. But it is the Academy portrait that carries the romantic story of her marriage.

There was at this time in London a young unmarried man, Charles Somers Cocks, Viscount Eastnor. This young man came of good English stock with a long line of respectable ancestors behind him who had stood by Church and State and had gathered their wealth in an honourable way. There is not a trace of a strain that is not undiluted English County family in their long line. His father, Earl Somers, who was still alive at this time, owned large properties in Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Surrey and Somers Town in London. His mother, Countess Somers, was the daughter of the Earl of Hardwicke. Lord Eastnor had been carefully brought up in the best traditions of his family, to whom he was devoted. His letters from Oxford to his mother and sister, his mother's letters to him and his sister's letters from the Court when she is in waiting on the

young Queen Victoria are charmingly simple and unworldly.

They have, as a family, cultivated tastes, are interested in art and literature and have a high standard of moral behaviour. Lord Eastnor is a Member of the Traveller's Club. With Mr. Layard he had explored the sites of Nineveh and Babylon. With Mr. Robert Curzon he had travelled in Greece, where he made sketches for Mr. Curzon's book "The Monasteries of the Levant." Among his other friends are Mr. Ruskin and Mr. Turner. If he had been free to choose a profession he would have been an artist. His mother sketched and painted in water-colours and had even taken lessons in Rome, when she was young, in that ladylike art. But she had no sympathy with her son's ambition. Indeed the very thought of a gentlemen becoming a professional anything was shocking. She impressed upon her son that "it was not considered the thing for a gentleman to draw too well like an artist, a gentleman might do many things pretty well but nothing too well."

This rich young amateur artist wandering through the Academy paused before Mr. Watts's portrait of Miss Virginia Pattle.

Mr. Watts, not being a lord's son had been

free to follow his star. Gazing on his professional skill, Lord Eastnor decided that if he might not paint the beautiful he would marry it. A few weeks later he met Miss Virginia in Lord Palmerston's drawing-room and as his mind was already made up they were soon engaged.

They were married in October, 1850.

It was a happy marriage. They were very much in love with each other, and most of their tastes and interests and friends were in common. But from the first the beautiful Virginia ruled. She was a devoted wife and took the greatest care of her husband, she interested and amused him and rescued him from his moods of despondency that he called the "Eastnor Gloom", but she set aside his judgment, and in serious matters it was a far wiser judgment than her own.

Here is a letter from Lord Eastnor to his mother written about three months after their marriage.

AT SEA. *January 9th 1851*

MY DEAR MOTHER,

I have an opportunity of sending one word by the pilot who leaves us in a few minutes — We took leave of Mrs. Prinsep at Southampton and are now fairly on our voyage with a fair wind, and every prospect of fine weather — hoping to

reach Lisbon on Sunday — the Steamer is very large and comfortable, and on the whole we are as well off as it is possible to be — we have but few passengers there is only one lady going to Madeira — she seems rather a curious character and has travelled all over the world; a pretty little woman — apparently American.

The captain is civil, and implores us to go on a little farther but we shall have had quite enough of the steamer, by the time we get to Madeira.

Car said that Courteney wanted us to take a book and a letter for Mrs. Leopold Acland, but they never arrived.

Watts has made such a beautiful drawing of Virginia in chalk on a larger scale the best likeness he has yet made — I have taken out a great quantity of drawing things to Madeira — which contains some of the finest scenery in the world — I have seen a great deal of Ruskin lately he has dined with us several times — Virginia has quite lost her first prejudice about him, and they have become great friends which I am very glad of.

Virginia sends her best love to all at Eastnor, and Believe me my dear Mother

Your affectionate

EASTNOR

TEVIOT STEAMER. *January* 1851

In the following August, Isabel was born. Soon after her birth they were off again, this time camping out among the Bedouin Arabs. A second daughter, Adeline, was born a year later, and a third daughter, Virginia, the next year. Between the arrivals of these two children Lord Eastnor succeeded his father and became Earl Somers.

The first mention of Isabel as an entity apart from her parents is just after her father and mother had settled into their London house in Carlton House Terrace, and Lady Somers had been struck down by scarlet fever. The children have been banished to Hampstead, where Mrs. Jackson, their Aunt Mia, takes charge of them. Lord Somers has gone to his sister-in-law Mrs. Thoby Prinsep at Little Holland House. From here he writes to his wife twice a day, and takes the letters to Carlton House Terrace, where a fumigated letter from her is waiting for him. These "Scarlet Fever Letters", dated and docketed in her handwriting, were fumigated when she was well again and tied up in neat bundles.

In one of Lord Somers's letters he tells her that he had ridden out to Hampstead to see the children.

Isabella did not come up and speak to me, but went on playing in Mia's garden without saying a word, but spoke to me by degrees. She had a large jampot full of little frogs in water, which she seemed to be interested with. She said you were in Italy.

A cousin remembers seeing Isabel in London when Isabel was four and Adeline three years old. "Adeline was a fat little thing who recited 'We are seven'; Isabel had just been to a children's party at Buckingham Palace where she had danced with Prince Arthur, and her smart frock was displayed in the drawing-room."

There is a story of that children's party at Buckingham Palace. When the other children left the ballroom to go to tea, Isabel refused to go with them. She stayed behind alone, wandering round inspecting everything with deep interest. When she came to the dais she paused before the bright and beautiful Royal Seat, and then climbed up and sat on the Queen's chair.

When the Queen came back and found her chair occupied by a child who made no attempt to get up, she said with a smile, "This is little Isabel." The child replied, "*Lady* Isabel, if you please."

When she was five years old she paid her first visit to her French great-grandmother.

Her father and mother were in Rome where they had settled for the winter. Lord Somers writes to his mother at Eastnor Castle that he has regularly apprenticed himself to one of the best French landscape painters named Benonville and is learning a good deal from him.

"The children," he writes, "will rather regret leaving Eastnor, as they are too young to take any pleasure in moving. They will stay a day or two in Paris, as poor old Madame L'Étang has always made me promise to send them to her at Versailles if we ever should bring them through France."

This visit to Versailles and the visits that followed belong to the few remembered joys of Lady Isabel's childhood.

There was freedom for a child in the house among the trees with the old French lady who never suggested that her guests should go back to the nursery, but seemed to enjoy their society at her side in the salon, and where on Sundays when the great-grandmother came home from Mass, they drank *eau sucrée* ceremoniously together.

The sense of freedom ever afterwards associated

in the child's mind with France was deepened by visits to the French Punch and Judy show, which she watched in the gardens with her great-grandmother.

The French Punch did things that outraged the conventions of an English nursery, funny beyond all telling to a child, and she might laugh loudly unreprieved, for the great-grandmother, with everybody else, was enjoying his scandalous jokes as much as she was. In later visits to Versailles both Isabel and Adeline made a point of taking their English governess to see Punch, that they might enjoy the horror of the Englishwoman at the jokes upper class French children and their Mamas laughed at together.

Lady Somers writes from Rome to her mother-in-law at Eastnor Castle:

NEW YEAR'S DAY

The Figlio and I send you a thousand loves and wishes for the New Year. My year has begun happily by a packet of journal from Miss Severs this morning with excellent accounts of the children.

I think she seems to take great interest in them and to be anxious to do all she can. She is a regular governess and a much more complicated

piece of machinery than little Pay, but I think it has its advantages as well as its drawbacks — and I do not think Pay would have been equal to managing Isabella, for as it was when Isabella was naughty Pay would sit and cry and be quite huffed! Pay was infinitely more pleasing in herself — her simplicity was charming.

ROME. 64 *Via Sistina.* 10 *March*

MY DEAREST LADY SOMERS,

Yesterday morning's post brought a letter from Miss Severs telling me of their arrival at Paris — which greatly relieved our minds and made us resolve to wait patiently for a few days — but at dusk just as I was returning home the diligence drove up and out came one little bundle of clothes after another, and little voices calling and arms stretched out — there they were safe and sound and in the wildest spirits — I never saw them in better condition. I made a certain allowance for excitement last night but they are in full force to-day and Isabella has given it to be her opinion that "Roman chickens are excellent" as their empty dish at the end of dinner fully testified. I am charmed with Baby, she is a very pretty dainty looking little creature and takes a large share of Eastnor's admiration.

I do not think "Septimia" very prepossessing she is priggish and rather uninteresting but I shall do my best to discover her best side — she appears to be anxious to take every care of the children only she sets about it in a tiresome way and forgets what mites they still are.

The seventh governess, — and the child is only five years old! Miss Severs is not mentioned again in the letters.

In July of the same year the children are again at Eastnor with their cousins in the care of their grandmother while their father and mother are abroad.

Lady Somers writes from Mytilene:

I think the cousinhood must be very happy together — Adeline must greatly appreciate the companionship of little Francis, Isabella's reproach to her having been that she wished to have a Man in the nursery which she, Isabella, would not allow!

The youngest child, Virginia, died suddenly of diphtheria some time while Lady Somers was abroad. The symptoms were not recognised and a specialist was not sent for till it was too late.

Lady Somers took the child's death so passionately to heart that she could not bear to remember she had ever lived.

All the letters of this time were destroyed; and almost the only records of the child's existence are a chalk drawing of her by Watts at Eastnor Castle and one or two references to her in letters while she was alive.

Isabel remembered her as the naughtiest child that ever lived, and this memory of her is borne out by a letter from Lady Somers to her mother-in-law written from Rome.

My chickens are never out of my thoughts. . . . We really must apologize for Virginia's behaviour in scratching your face and making such an attack upon you. I really hope it was not too violent for we know she has wonderful powers in her little hands.

This sudden intrusion of death filled Lady Somers with fears for the future, and from now on an oppressive watch was set up on the health of Isabel and Adeline. They were kept apart from other children as much as possible for fear of infection; they must not romp in case they overheated themselves; every kind of excitement was

banned; and their food was so strictly regulated that Isabel in these nursery days was so hungry that she used to buy Adeline's egg at breakfast when she could afford the twopence Adeline charged for it.

Sir Henry Layard asked Isabel, when she was about five years old, if she had a good time in this world. She answered gravely, "I should enjoy myself very much if I hadn't so many parents."

This was sober truth. She was surrounded by nurses, governesses and relations all occupied in taking care of her, and all convinced that she must be happy and ought to be good; because every nurse, governess and child who saw her envied her her possessions.

But the child nursed in her heart a secret longing to play, as she had seen other children play in the London Squares, good wild romping games, and this she was never allowed to do. Her childhood was a series of revolts against the powers that never left her alone to do as she pleased.

Two photographs of the rebel taken by Mrs. Cameron still exist, — one taken when she was asleep because she had been too rebellious to photograph while she was awake; the other caught in her sulkiest mood, in a white cotton

petticoat, furious that she had not been allowed to put on her prettiest dress.

Here are two of her early letters written in pencil in a large hand.

MY DARLING MOTHER

I love you very much it rained all day I have not much to say except it is very nice to have no Madam L. or Monsieur G. Goodbye dear Mum from

ISABELLA

I am verry sorry you are ill I forgot it so I put it after.

and the second:

MY DEAR MAMA

I hope you are quite well it is so dreary without you Princes Gate would be like a desert if Gily were not here. How long are you going to be away darling. What is the place you are like are there any children. I am writing in the emty drawing room give my love to papa I hope we shall go to the "German Fair" soon.

Goodbye darling Mama
from your affectionate
daughter ISABELLA

The only delights that remained in her memory of her childhood were of going out in the morning with her nurse from their house in Carlton House Terrace across the Green Park to the tame cow that gave milk on the spot to opulent children who brought their mugs to her, and of the visits to Versailles, — the gracious great-grandmother and the French Punch's scandalous behaviour.

CHAPTER II

HER MOTHER

WHILE the children were in the nursery Lady Somers was enjoying a social triumph like that of a beautiful heroine of the three-volume novel of her day.

"To see her face is a personal kindness for which one ought to be thankful to Fortune. . . . When she comes into the room, it is like a beautiful air of Mozart breaking upon you: when she passes through the ball-room, everybody turns and asks who is that Princess, that fairy lady?

"‘They all tell me that,’ she said; ‘nobody cares for anything but that,’ cried the gentle and sensitive creature, feeling within that she had a thousand accomplishments, attractions, charms, which her hundred thousand lovers would not see, whilst they were admiring her mere outward figure and headpiece.”

So Thackeray had written of her when she was a young unmarried girl. Now she was Countess Somers with the background of Mr. Watts’s ad-

miration of her beauty, and the romantic story of her marriage. All her world was at her feet. Men fell in love with her at first sight; even a small boy who, in Hyde Park with his Mama one day, saw this lovely young woman in a pink shawl drive by, carried the vision of her in his heart for years.

Her presence at the ball drew people merely to look at her, and guests hustling each other stood up on chairs to catch a glimpse of her. If she went shopping a crowd gathered in the street to see her pass. She carried her triumph so lightly that she had as many women as men in her train. She was bored by mere admiration and swept it aside; her tremendous interest in other human beings made her eager to get on terms of intimacy as quickly as possible with everybody she met. This was the real secret of her success. Her interest in the people who admired her was far greater than their interest in her. Nobody could resist her sympathetic preoccupation with their affairs; with all the force of a vacuum cleaner it drew the secrets of the heart from the tightest bosoms.

Her husband, who had a sense of humour while she had none, amused himself by watching her

friendships and accused her of drawing even the secrets of the confessional from the Tractarian rector of Eastnor, partly through her interest in him and partly through her interest in the two old maids who were his only penitents.

One of her letters to her mother-in-law, written from Mount Athos while she was yachting in the Mediterranean with her husband and Sir Coutts Lindsay, shows her sympathetic mind at work.

Sept. 1857

There is a great deal of drawing in these Monasteries — they are generally a great mass of buildings — like a little town — and although massive full of complications which fall together into the most picturesque combinations — They look like visions of the middle ages, and are in fact genuine bits of it which succeeding times have not altered or disfigured — I was afraid I should have some difficulty about landing here, the first day that Eastnor and Coutts spent in drawing I went on shore in the evening and after groping about the beach a little while I stole up to the garden gate out of which I met them coming accompanied by a monk who when he saw me looked the other way and immediately ignored my existence. The following day the same monk came to see us on board the yacht to pay us a visit on the part of the brotherhood of his Convent — and at the end of an hour or

two he became so happy and confidential that he told us all his history — and whilst we sat at dinner and I pressed him to eat a little dry rice and a few biscuits which he steadily refused enlarging greatly upon his wonderful powers of abstinence from food, he did not hold the wine in equal abhorrence — before I appear to throw any imputation on him I must say that wine is not denied by the Greek church and that I believe he was a lay brother or at all events had not taken the strictest vows for in that case I imagine he would not have paid us the visit — . . .

.
We have seen a great deal of the monks who are I think really holy men — they are so gentle and loveable — I feel quite an affection for them. A great many who were suffering in various ways came to us for advice and medicine, we could do them no good but as they were bent on having medicine of some sort and thought anything out of the medicine chest was likely to cure them it was impossible to send them back empty handed — they used to come and sit all day on deck, when we were lying off the monastery of Xenophon, in groups of ten and fifteen at a time, one by one detailing their complaints and I was never tired of sitting with them for there was something interesting and soothing about them — I never longed so to understand something about the merest rudiments of medicine — it seemed so sad

to think that their illnesses would aggravate year after year without any chance of cure or alleviation — I wish Lord Stratford would send round the Man-of-War stationed in the Bosphorus on a cruise here with a Doctor to visit the monasteries — it would be a Christian and a politic act — After a few days we became great friends and one evening they took me over the convent gardens and insisted on giving me a peach citron or pomegranate from every tree we passed — besides sending us vegetables and grapes and having bread made for us by one of themselves.

What a romantic vision she must have been to the monks, this beautiful young woman who sailed into their solitude and dosed them with her pills. Did she insist on the Man-of-War from the Bosphorus carrying a doctor to them? She appears to have had power to move mountains.

Happily she kept the letters of her men friends, and from these neat bundles tied up with blue velvet ribbon one might reconstruct the dreams of one's childhood of an Earthly Paradise called Society where everyone was rich and beautiful and nobody was rude.

Mr. Watts, who is decorating the rooms at Eastnor Castle, writes:

LITTLE HOLLAND HOUSE
KENSINGTON,
Monday

DEAR LADY SOMERS,

Though little given to writing I must acknowledge the receipt of your kind little note. I hope you are quite well again and enjoying better weather than we have here . . . I am glad the staining of the framework of the ceiling is an improvement. I expected it would be. I am impatient to commence seriously, seeing in my mind's eye a noble work; but alas! my powers of execution bear no proportion to my perceptions, nevertheless I feel something like a glow of inspiration at the thought of putting out my strength at Eastnor, of embellishing a place which I hope, and do think, will be rendered illustrious in future times by the beauty, and still more by the virtues of Virginia Countess of Somers whose name with such possessions and qualities will belong to history, and whom a future poet may celebrate as he who wrote of "Sidney's sister Pembroke's Mother." You know that I am not a flatterer and therefore may believe me when I say that the idea of making my work a tribute to the excellence which God has given you, and the merit I believe you to cultivate, will stimulate me more than could the ordinary ambition which I lack, the knowledge of the existence of the beautiful and the good, even though I may not

see it, affects me like a perpetual strain of music. I will return to Eastnor and my giants . . .

Pray give my love to the children, teach them to call me Signor, and believe me by that name the sincerest of your friends.

Lord Lansdowne, at this time a busy Cabinet Minister, sends her his copy of Ruskin's latest book to read and mark for him "in the hope that your pencil will give me a clue to some of his flowers, as the whole of so variegated a nosegay would be more than I could manage at this moment."

Her pencil marks his Tennyson also, and they meet to discuss both Tennyson and Ruskin. But it is not only literature they discuss. In another of his many letters to her he writes:

Shelburne's *entree* into the Foreign Office is no longer the state secret it was when I mentioned it to you, for he is to take possession on Saturday — and I must tell you who his successor will (I hope) be, for I am rather proud of my recommendation to the electors of Caine.

Lord Lansdowne's letters carry home the conviction that the "Family Herald" myth of one's childhood bordered on reality.

From the Marquis of Lansdowne to the Countess Somers at Reigate Priory.

Postmark date 1855

RICHMOND May 31st.

DEAR LADY SOMERS

I was very glad to hear a better account of you last week from L^d Somers last week — you will I am afraid think it very vain of me, as you told me you might occasionally visit London again, if I cannot resist the temptation of giving you the earliest notice that I have just fixed wednesday the 13th to have the Italian singers in my gallery, in the hope that as you have liked a concert there before, it might possibly influence you in the preference of a day for one of your excursions to town — it is at least disinterested of me, as I should probably see less of you than on any other occasion.

I came here in search of a little sun and air, for part of the Whitsuntide holidays but have been grievously disappointed in the former —

My concert will be the last thing in the way of dissipation at L. House this season, for Lady Shelburne, whom I am compelled to rely upon chiefly in such matters is going soon after to accompany her husband, to Paris for some weeks —

ever sincerely yours

LANSDOWNE

I must add that on my way here, I went to meet Lord Panmure at Marochetti's to talk to

him about a monument to the poor victims at Scutari, and walking thro' the rooms caught a glimpse of a small sitting figure on the ground behind a greek statue, the perfect beauty of which quite arrested my progress — on enquiring I found it was Miss Jackson, what Miss Jackson I immediately guessed and was not surprised.

Miss Jackson was the daughter of Lady Somers's beautiful sister Mia Jackson.

Postmark date 1856

LONDON *July 30th*

DEAR LADY SOMERS

Tho' I do not suspect you of forgetting your promise to write me a few lines tomorrow, let me suggest to you, if as I hope you will come, to tell me at what hour you will be there for luncheon before the concert, and whether you will be to be met with near the great entrance or in any other part of the building, for in the Chrystal palace like the great world, it is one thing to seek and another to find —

ever yours

LANSDOWNE

I shall go at all events, in my light barouche, which I mention because I could either take you both, back to the station, or into town if you have occasion.

Surely the Man-of-War sailed from the Bosphorus. No wonder Lady Somers found her world an excellent world and if here and there a little too English, always amenable to charm.

Her own parties were great social functions. Lord Somers's town house was one of the few beautiful houses in London in those mid-Victorian days. They had decorated and furnished it together, Lord Somers never doing more than suggesting, she always deciding. "Gold paper in the Hall" is discussed in their letters, "Lord Holland's blue sky is *too dark*." "Sky blue" is recommended and "green chairs."

There are greater flights at Eastnor Castle. "The Jasper columns are quite magnificent." . . . "I saw the green Purbeck and was quite converted nothing better or more harmonious in colour could have been chosen." Chinese wall papers, marble columns, alabaster capitals, new clocks, marqueterie furniture are all discussed, and a design by Watts for a fresco of "the Panel of the winds" is disapproved as "a very faulty composition" and is finally whitewashed out by Lord Somers's orders. The long library is hung with Gobelin Tapestry, and one by one the valuable collection of pictures from Italy arrives.

In this setting "the Chatelaine of Eastnor"

and her husband entertained their friends in the early summer and for the late autumn shooting; and between London, Eastnor and Reigate there were constant flights to Paris in search of clothes, to Italy in search of pictures; varied by long weeks of idleness yachting in the Mediterranean while Lord Somers, with Sir Coutts Lindsay or Edward Lear, sketched.

But in "the midst of all things" as she puts it, Lady Somers never forgot her one supreme duty, the training of her "March lambs" now in the schoolroom, for the day when they will come out and share the pleasures of the world she is now enjoying.

In her plans for their training no detail has been overlooked. Her mind, with its French shrewdness, was perfectly candid with itself; she knew exactly what she wanted. They were both to be great ladies, but not after the model of an English great lady, for, in her opinion, not one Englishwoman in a hundred was trained for her position.

"Did you ever see an Englishwoman who knew how to enter a room?" she would ask; and "How they *ruin* themselves with their clothes. An Englishwoman will put anything, *anything*, on her head."

The March lambs in their schoolroom must have

looked out on the world in which their father and mother lived, as the Early Christians looked up to a future Heaven. To this beautiful place of delight and excitement, of constant change and glorious freedom, they too would come some day.

Meanwhile their days were dreary; the present with dull governesses to whom they must be polite, and the woeful drudgery of German translation and Chamber's Questions often obscured the prospect of their happy future.

Now and then they caught a glimpse of the bright and beautiful beings who had already reached that happy state, and heard them speak of its joys; each word sank deep into their hearts.

Isabel, waked one night by the murmur of low voices, found her mother and a Pattle aunt sitting one each side on the foot of her bed in earnest conversation and heard her aunt say,

"Julia Norman has come back from Paris with her hair dressed in peasant plaits, right round her head."

As she dozed off to sleep again the child promised herself that some day she too would wear her hair like that.

But hope deferred maketh the heart sick, and after these Pisgah sights the schoolroom with drab governesses was drearier than ever.

Between outbursts of pent up energy, and days of apathy from which nothing could rouse her, Isabel ran through and exhausted the limited powers of twenty governesses.

The visits of their mother to the schoolroom, and their visits downstairs to her boudoir when she was at home, were joys tempered with fear. Her all-seeing eye detected negligences and ignorances that the duller eye of a governess had passed over. They knew their mother was disinterested in her desire to have them good and beautiful and clever — all these they must be before they were fit for Society — but they trembled before the love that would not tolerate one blemish in her lambs.

Isabel would have preferred to forget both her faulty past and her wonderful future, and be gay and joyful in the present hour while their “Lovely Bird” was at home with them, but to please her mother she would subdue her spirit, listen earnestly to her exhortations and make fresh vows of good behaviour.

Education in the modern sense they had none. From morning to night they were trained in the *accomplishments*, “acquirements such as belong to the cultivated or fashionable classes.”

Here is a plan of one day’s work written out

in Adeline's handwriting for their mother's inspection.

MONDAY. *German Day*

ADELINE	ISABEL
9.30 to 10.	9.30 to 10.
practising alone	German translation with Miss V.
10. to 10.30	10. to 10.30
German translation with Miss V.	practising alone.
10.30 to 11.	10.30 to 11.
Music with Miss V	learn Ger. poetry.
11. to 11.30	11. to 11.30
Learn Ger. poetry	Music with Miss V.
11.30 to 12	11.30 to 12.
read German	
12 to $\frac{1}{2}$	12 to $\frac{1}{2}$
or 1.15 to 1.45	or 1.15 to 1.45
Lie down and learn	Chamber's Questions
4.30 to 5.30	4.30 to 5.30
Lie down Grecian History	read aloud
5.30 to 6.30	5.30 to 6.30
Write G. exercise	Write G. letter
6.30 to seven	6.30 to seven
Singing	

The afternoon was spent driving in a carriage with a governess or riding one at a time with a groom. They were not allowed to ride together because this might have excited them, or to ride two days in succession because this might have overtired them.

In spite of the whirl of her social engagements when she was in England, or her constant jaunts abroad, their mother's watchful eye never slept. Her supervision of their training was constant and minute, — their health, their food, their morals, their manners, the amount of energy they are putting into their work, especially into their music over which they were both rather listless, — no detail escaped her.

Health is her first concern. For Lady Somers as for Dr. Watts,

*Dangers stand thick through all the ground
To push us to the tomb;
And fierce diseases wait around
To hurry mortals home.*

Only by the most diligent care can these dangers be avoided; the least imprudence, the slightest relaxation of vigilance, and a fierce disease will have seized its prey.

At the first sniff of a cold in the head, the least flagging of their attention to lessons, they are packed off at once "to breathe fresh sea breezes." Again and again their cavalcade sets out from one or other of their homes, from Eastnor Castle, Reigate Priory, or Prince's Gate in London, to Brighton, to Cromer, to Worthing, to Aberystwith — the Ladies Isabel and Adeline their

governesses, two maids, and a groom and a coachman following with their ponies, the carriage and the horses.

They carry all the paraphernalia of the school-room with them and if, as it happened at Aberystwith, the piano in their lodgings is not fit to practise on, a piano is sent after them.

They are charged with instructions on every conceivable subject, beds, draughts, medicine, church-going, reading.

Their mother's eye is on them still; her letters follow every day to their lodgings with more instructions, more entreaties, more warnings, more precautions.

Wednesday 13 Feb^y Eastnor Castle

Do you feel *very well*? And are you sensible of being much stronger for Brighton air? Does yr throat look better? Do you or Addy ever have back ache? or pains or aches anywhere? Is your appetite good? Do you like *sea-kale* — the only vegetable I can send you just now? I sent off the last two pheasants and 4 rabbits to you darlings. . .

My kindest remembrances to Miss V. Are your dinners nice and is the meat well done?

Come well wrapped up you must on no account allow any window to be open in the railway — put on your worsted veil — have yr large

shawl round your knees — yr sealskin and grey cloak over it, you need not keep your veil down in the train.

I have not answered your previous letter about a book . . . in the mean time content yourself with what she (Miss V.) is reading to you, which tho' not perhaps a book fitted to charm your heart, may give you much sound knowledge of Bible history which you ought to take pains to acquire and w^h I daresay your Father wd think necessary — If I understand you rightly you do not *dislike* the book as a study but would like your morning reading to have more feeling in it.

To these her children reply:

5 1866

Monday

MY DARLING MUM

My neck is much better and Miss Vickermann took me to church yesterday it was a beautiful mild day and I had a *warm* front seat! quite at the front seat. Dr. Helbers has made me paint it with *iordine* it is much better but quite brown from the "Iordine."

I hope my own lovely Moo is quite well.

her good

happy

child

ISABEL.

Monday
19

DEAR DARLING MUMY

It is such a comfort to write to my moo and to feel sure that she is there for I *had such awful dream* last night I dreamt my moo was run over *by a train*.

We are both well and very Flourishing

Miss V announced to me at my Music today that I was perservering (a thing which I had never heard said before) and she said that if I went on as I had begun I should play the "Son-nate Pathetique" in three years Please don't think me consected my moo but I was very glad because I *have taken* pains.

Come Come Come to your children your March lambs.

I have just written a long letter to Aunt Emily the book which she has sent is so nice such a relief after Theological Library

Goodbye

My sweet

Angel Mum

Your child

ISABEL

We like sea kale very much My petticoat bodes are very comfortable

Again Lady Somers writes:

Postmark date 1866

Saturday 28 April

MY DARLING ISABEL,

Your loving little letter gave your Mummy's heart great pleasure — I believe entirely that you wish to do right and to exert yourself to be industrious but wishing is not doing — and days weeks and months slip away, and if the half hours are not turned to good account as they are portioned out to be used, a whole life time is frittered away before you have acquired any of the habits that you have from day to day *wished* to possess.

It is only the *present* hour that we can ever call ours — to do what you have to do and to do your best that is the proper use of life and time — Just make a little note at the end of each day how many duties you have dawdled over and done with only a quarter of your mind — in fact I don't think you ever bring your *whole* mind and attention to *anything* but the reading of an interesting story book —

If you were to make the notes I propose and look over them on a Sunday it would give you a truer picture of how you have kept good resolutions than you can possibly have by mere retrospect, by mere looking back from memory. Would you do this for your Mother's sake?

Yr Aunt Sophia called yesterday evening I was very glad to hear about my darlings — I have written to Miss V. that you may have another

pair of boots with white sewing from Dutton, I thought you had had two pairs of that sort.

Saturday

MY DARLING

I think you will like to have a letter from me on Sunday morning will you put it by you whilst you read the morning Service and think that your Mum's spirit is hovering near you —

I have very little time before post my darling because your Uncle Thoby has sat a great part of the afternoon with me. He is very well and in great spirits and says he is going to write a Poem to Addy and asked if you liked yours I said you were delighted with it. I shewed him yr photo and he said "Why this is you" "No, Isabel" I said "Why its like you she looks serious whereas she's apt to be a little wild!" When I shewed him Addy's he said "By George it looks thirty"!

Sunday Evening

MY DARLING ISABEL

I am so tired and sleepy that the sofa is more tempting than my writing table but as I said I w^d write to you (in my letter to Addy yesterday) I think My Boo w^d be disappointed if the Evening post came in empty tomorrow — I hope you have had a fine day and a happy quiet Sunday my Darlings —

I went to L. H. House yesterday evening but came home early — Nothing positive is known

about yr Uncle Thoby's eye yet but there are good hopes and they are all raised by it — I hope and pray it may end in the blessing of his sight being spared.

Your Papa and I went to the Church in Vere St. which he always goes to and I heard his Tutor Mr Maurice preach, he is now getting an old man, I remember him years ago and he has still the same intellectual face — he looks what he is a man of deep thought and deep feelings — he preached a beautiful sermon on sympathy charity and compassion — I went to see Lady S. this afternoon which was again a long way off and I am tired with the two cab expeditions — she c^d not see me till after 3 o'clock. I found her better I am glad to say. This is all my news darling and I will say good night with blessings on both y^r heads

Your loving

MUMMIE

I will write to Addy as usual tomorrow.

Tuesday night

MY DARLING

Your account is very clear and sensible and goes to your Mum's heart and your Papa's too—

I saw Fergusson today for myself and of course talked of you he said cold was the thing to be avoided — I have decided on having you up and have written *all our wishes* to Miss V.

Keep happy my Darling all will be well if you will be *careful of trifles* is there a draught from the windows at each side as you sit at y^r dressing table? if there is don't sit there — put a foulard round y^r throat and under your hat tied under your chin in the railway.

Bless you my lamb — tell my other Boo not to mind being left behind for a couple of days I will return with you

Your own MUM.

PRINCE'S GATE *Thursday evening*
26 April

MY DARLING ISABEL,

I received your little note yesterday evening. I am sorry to say it gave me as little pleasure as it must have cost you time and thought to write it, which was not much as it was short and carelessly written and composed, and told me as little as possible about yourselves. Considering Miss V. was ill it wd have been more thoughtful to have written all you could about what you were doing etc. although Miss V. is still ill she wrote me a nice long letter and tells me how much you have been out and that you have done what lessons you could without her, and all about you both and mentions that she has been in bed since Monday Evening but hoped to get up to dinner yesterday.

I am always glad to have a little note from you and the love conveyed in a line you know how

dear it is to me, but *letters* like every other act of love and affection cannot be done without a little sacrifice of time and thought and to give pleasure one must exert one's mind and heart a little more than what is required to string together a few affectionate expressions and no more.

When you and Addy write to your Mummy it should not be merely *to knock off* a few lines with as little trouble as possible but you should sit down with the feeling "Mama cares so much to hear about us that in the midst of all things she writes daily and cares to hear every day from us let me see what I have to tell her that we have done to-day, what have been the occurrences and what thoughts have I to tell her."

Isabel, who suffers most from governesses, writes:

We like Miss V. so much she is so nice quiet and so kind as far as I can judge from the time she has been with us she seems to get on better than any governess we have had yet she makes one *feel* older and treats one as older and *above being idle* so that one cannot (or I do not feel ever *really* inclined to be so) you understand darling — I do not mean to say one never is but I try not to be idle but to work and to do what she wishes. as to music she teaches wonderfully we are learning rather a difficult duet and we can play 3 pages of it together.

I do not like scales but we play them all with care I think we play hour and a quarter sometimes half each.

Miss V. wants to know if you would mind sending us a little game as it is *so dear* here!

Adeline writes:

3 Regency Sq^{re}
BRIGHTON

MY DARLING MUM,

I received Julia's letter today and y^r little postscript I am so sorry you should think I have been neglectful to my Mum I will write very diligently in future — You know darling I would tell you everything and if I had been naughty I would tell you directly, I have tried, however to do my best and be a good lamb — We do our lessons regularly, and try to do them well for your sake. It will not be very long I hope dearie, before we shall see you again, how nice that will be.

We like Miss Vickerman very much indeed she is so nice and kind somewhat particular with lessons and when they are over she lets us amuse ourselves as we like wh. is very nice.

We have very nice evenings, when we work, talk and read So darling you must imagine y^r March Lambs contented and happy but longing to go to their own Moo.

Sweet one I was so sorry to hear that you are tired and have a headache. Do not dearest tire

Paradise was the children's name for Eastnor. Virginia was the daughter of Lady Somer's sister Mrs. Dalrymple, the "Virgie" of other letters, and no relation to the "little Cockes." Little May of the next letter was the daughter of Mrs. Prinsep.

16 Jan.

HOLLAND
HOUSE

MY OWN DARLING MAMA,

How dear of you and *also wicked* to write to us last night! how *dead tired* you must have been *poor poor Bird*

Papa left a little map for us please thank very much for it will you send the Book Mrs. Layard gave me the Book you said had such lovely foregrounds.

We will try to do everything you wish my own precious darling I *will not get excited* with Virgy it is such a pleasure having her Little May is here she *is a very nice little* thing so gentle and lady like her 3 quarters is *really pretty*

Good bye my
own darling
Mum
Your own loving
ISABELLA

Lady Somers writes:

Monday
Even^g.

MY DARLING ISABEL,

I am thankful to hear that the swelling on y^r poor dear little throat is gone down — *be prudent*, it is a relief to me as I feared it might be obstinate and so it may next time so be prudent my Childy—

I have asked Miss Vickerman to have your curls cut and Addy's also, not new ones but the old ones ferretted out and just tipped they have got mixed up with the back hair but are to be found!

I am very sorry for Miss V's cold, you and Addy must try not to catch it — the East winds are dreadful — I took a drive yesterday and took Elia with me it was in the close carriage and I went towards Putney intending to get out and walk a little, when, long before we got to Putney to my dismay she was very sick out of the carriage window without any warning and I had to come home as fast as I could! today the wind was very bleak and I staid out only a little while. I am very glad your hats are pretty tell me how your frocks look sleeves etc and your blue feather hats when they come

a 1000 kisses to my Boo No 2 and No 1 be
good children

y^r own
MUM

Elia was an Italian girl Lady Somers brought back with her from Italy. Nearly all her family

had been killed in an earthquake near Naples. She was being trained as a maid.

EASTNOR

Friday 8 May

MY DARLING MARMOO,

As I had two letters from my lambs this morning which gave me great pleasure I will not give them less than they gave me — you are quite right in saying I s^d be the better for coming here I am so glad I came — the weather is so exquisite and everything is so beautiful it is balm to one's eyes to sit and look through the open window and to hear the Cuckoo calling there is no other sound and the quiet is so delicious.

We enjoyed our expedition to old Storridge yesterday we had rather a long and to me difficult walk over the Common which is on a hill — but the air was so reviving and the view over Worcestershire and Herefordshire so magnificent that I was delighted to have accomplished the walk — we thought how the Hitties would have enjoyed it . . .

I have seen very few of the poor people as yet — Old Whitcombe Mrs. Smith Martha Morgan and a few others who have had their wants supplied without my seeing them . . .

If you go to Evening Church on Sunday mention it in the morning and ask Miss B. to go with you — I leave you both to judge whether you will go or not only I beg you to *consider fatigue* —

and to take an hour for lying down. I am very sorry abt y^r Poplinette skirt

Take care the carriage door is well shut on Sunday when you 3 start in it if Aunt Sara's carriage brings May on Sunday mind that *Addie and you go in it* with May to Church and tell Miss B to order a Hansom or close cab as she prefers — tell her nicely

Wednesday Evening
PRINCE'S GATE

MY DARLING ISABELLA,

I wrote such a long letter to your Papa this aftrn. that I could do no more — I heard from him this morning, he says he has enjoyed his shooting and that the party are very happy — he says “there is no snow or frost here it is quite another climate” but I fancy there is just frost enough to be pleasant it is most fortunate that he has fine weather for the shooting and I hope it will last there is a Moon and it adds to the beauty of the place —

I am better and down in the drawingroom but I feel weak.

You could not have done anything that wd do me more good than to tell me you are doing y^r lessons well and to give me y^r promise that you will keep up to it. Do not relax, unless you strain every endeavour *now* you will lose all control over yrself as to your power over yr self to bring yr self to work as well as over yr temper —

Take each day and each *hour* of every day as it comes and *stick* to what is right — govern yr self asking God's *help* from hour to hour and at the end of each day reckon up in what you have wavered — Don't excuse yr self to yr self and God will excuse you —

Our endeavour should be to lay bare our faults to our own too blind eyes — It is enough now for me to know that you are *trying hard* — you made me very unhappy at Brighton — I don't think you know my darling how unhappy you make me — My agitation disappointment and anxiety at seeing you make such a beginning with a new governess and the little comfort you gave me in yrself were greatly the cause of my being ill — I think it right to tell it to you, you don't know how much you could be to me and how my heart bleeds when I lose hopes of you — but still I am always hoping and loving you — and now I will trust by God's help that your good resolutions will not fail.

God bless you my Darling

And again:

Elia is doing very well — she is a good girl and does her work — and is very happy but misses you and Addy very much She was delighted to get her letter whilst the tears ran down her affect^{ate} little face — She has a good little heart . . .

Have you got chintz both of you to make

frocks? what books are you reading? and what is Miss V. reading to you? How much I like to hear *everything* you can tell me. I wonder whether you have been to St. Paul's this afternoon? I am with you in all you do and feel my lambs

Adeline writes:

REGENCY HOUSE

Wednesday Dec^r 11

MY OWN DEAREST MUMIE

I was so glad to get your letter and to hear you were better — Isabel's cold is still rather heavy, she has *no cough*. Miss Beyer thought she had better stay in bed this morning . . .

I hope dearest Mumie that you will soon be able to go to Eastnor — Your Boos will soon come to you it is getting near Christmas.

The name of Elia's brother is Guiseppe she thanks you very much for getting the vests and trousers.

Are you going to send the box soon if so we will write and say it is coming she is most anxious that it should arrive before Christmas.

I lie down on the floor twice a day for half an hour at a time and I try to lie straight and still and to hold myself well. I have begun wearing my striped linsey dress w^h is very warm and comfortable . . .

The expenses have not been so great lately but we thought we had better tell you in time —

Miss B. is going to send you Mrs. Salters Memorandum. Of course we have not said anything to Miss B. about ordering too much as she wd not like it coming from us and she orders the things to please us. I am going out now so I must say goodbye to my own Mumie.

Isabel sends you best love ever your loving
ADDIE.

And Isabel:

Friday

9

DARLING MUMEY,

Thank you so much for your dear letter

I send you a little drawing done by your child your poor child 3 wekes ago lent a 1/- to Miss V. I have *binted and told* her of it 10000000 times till now I am ashamed to say any more and your poor child is *poor so poor* darling Mumey we are well and happy

how I should like to see Mr. Chumodelys house 15 lovely pots of jam arrived to gladden our and Miss V.'s heart . . .

ever darling
bird and Mum
your own Boo
ISABEL

Again:

I *May*

DARLING MUMEY

Today! today! today! Darling Bird our last!
last! last! day in Brighton Your Dear children
are quiet . . . We are in the midst of Packing
I cannot write more darling Miss V has called

Your loving child

ISABEL

you won't mind this hurried note Miss Vicker-
man told me *not* to write more.

CHAPTER III

THE SCHOOLROOM

FROM these letters it would appear that the two children, except for occasional outbursts of bad temper or lapses into idleness, were passive in the hands of their mother. But in reality Isabel's character was developing quietly and surely under this passive exterior. Like many another sturdy Victorian child she had learnt that when you differed from your elders it was wise to say nothing, so she hid her thoughts, not from cowardice or a wish to deceive, but as a duck goes under water, from an instinct of self-preservation.

In her early schoolroom days she had been shut up in her bedroom and fed on bread and water for lightly questioning the existence of a place called Hell, while Adeline, who had taken the governess's word for it, was free to eat, drink and be merry.

Adeline's conscience was not so robust as her sister's; she was sensitive to the breath of authority and suffered in spirit if she harboured a secret thought.

Isabel rather enjoyed her own daring, and it

was after all an innocent daring, not rebellious but adventurous, and went no further than the imaginations of her heart.

Only once, when she was thirteen and Adeline twelve, was the flame of open revolt kindled in the schoolroom. This was on the question of the American Civil War. Their world, the English aristocracy, was on the side of the South, either enthusiastically or with a superior attitude of indifference. Lord Lansdowne, in one of his letters to Lady Somers, tells her:

I have been in vain endeavouring to get up an interest in the scenes which are being enacted on so extensive a scale across the atlantic, there is something to me singularly uninteresting in the American character, tho' not without exceptions — and they have not I think shone more in the field than on the platform. I am glad that Garibaldi has not consented to soil his hands in such a contest.

Isabel and Adeline, fired by "Uncle Tom's Cabin", argued passionately on the side of the North.

Her milder adventures in freedom of thought were either in planning a future for herself — that was not the future her mother had planned — or in launching out into deeper waters in re-

ligion, under the influence of St. Paul's Church in Brighton, than her mother approved.

Sometimes she confided in Emily Pulling, one of the two daughters of the Rector of Eastnor, girls about her own and Adeline's age. She used to copy out for Emily's use her own secret and unauthorized prayers.

At one time when she and Adeline were in Brighton she made up her mind to be a nun and bought herself and wore round her neck a large ivory cross, as an earnest of her secret intention.

But no adventure of the mind made up for the dullness and monotony of the schoolroom. As the girls grow older their letters to their mother are heavy with boredom. Their mother's letters to them, from her wonderful, glowing, exciting world, must have tantalized them in their prison, and her exhortation to keep on patiently preparing for a still far off future happiness must have fallen on weary ears.

[1866]

Saturday Evening 11 August
ST. MORITZ

. . . I *adjure* you by all the love you bear your own Mum to be *thoughtful* for *Isabel* as well as for *yourself* that some little careless imprudence may not bring a chill — beware of thin boots in

damp and muddy roads — and forgetting y^r cloaks driving etc — It makes me happy to think of you at Eastnor — I only wish we were there and yet I am very thankful for being in this fine air which will I think breathe new life into me . . .

There are a great many Italians and just now they are very anxious and unhappy at the termination of the Armistice — They are going to fight for Trent and the Italian Tyrol — and perhaps may lose Venice in the attempt — but we hope not. They receive telegrams from Milan and discuss the news with sad faces having husbands brothers and friends in the Army — and their country's fate trembling in the balance.

The Duchess of S^t Arpino is here I walk with her in the morning and with the Duchess of Rignano who is a Roman and a daughter of the Princess Doria who was a Shrewsbury and therefore English — The Duchess of S^t Arpino's little girl is with her, she is eleven years old and plays *beautifully* on the Piano — she has a German governess who is here . . .

I liked y^r little landscape very much — I long for you both to have drawing lessons — we asked Mr Leighton today who he could recommend but he did not know of a Master.

I think it is very nice for you both to have manuscript books — it is so pleasant to read over one's favourites when the books themselves are not at hand — I used to write out a great deal when I was a girl.

CADENABBIA COMO

This is your first Sunday at Aberystwith . . . It makes your Mum's heart happy to think of you breathing fresh sea breezes — . . . I hope you will have a nice Piano, but whether or no that you will practise with a good will — how many a poor artist that can't afford a good Piano contents himself with a bad instrument — when I was at Spa before I was married but engaged to y^r Papa, Katherine Maberly, Mrs. Fox whom you saw at Brighton was there, she had a *little* room high up in the house with a wretched piano (no better could be got) on which she used to practise some hours every day — she plays divinely and is the soul of music. I think my own Boos will not disappoint their Mum of one of her *great aspirations*, and *if you knew how much* your Papa wishes that you should play and sing well and be good musicians I am sure you w^d feel really ambitious about getting on to that point that you could sit down to the Piano and give him half an hours pleasure. This idea ought not to damp y^r energy but to fire it. You need not think it will be “so long before we can do that,” for you can do it now and a few months work would do it if it was work done with the whole heart.

Docile and patient Adeline reports that she is doing her best to please her mother. “I am learning a very pretty piece called *Le Jet d'Eau*, it is

9 pages and rather more difficult than what I have played lately but I should like to know it by the time you come back," and that she is copying some of Miss Proctor's poetry into her manuscript book. And Isabel writes:

Our lessons go on very well and we have got into no scrapes or I would tell you dear Bird . . . Aunt Sofy retrimmed our hats with the blue gauze veiles and they look quite beautiful. Our *striped* jackets that Jepp made fit *abomaibly* . . . I am going to wear Addie's old back board for one hour *every day* because I think if I am made to sit up for one hour it will be easy to do so afterwards.

Aberystwith is dull, — and there is a dreadful high wind. There is nothing to do, there are no walks "as the hillocks at the back of the town are mostly ploughed"; the piano in their lodging is wretched; they have "taken the precaution of subscribing 2/6 a month to the lending library." If only they might have stayed at Eastnor where everything was looking so beautiful! Then comes another glowing letter from Italy:

HOTEL BARBESI. GRAN CANALE.

29 Sept — VENICE

. . . After leaving Peschiera we began to see signs of the war — the mulberry trees and vines

cut down to the ground and battered houses which looked very sad — there were a number of Austrian officers in their white uniforms standing on the platform at Peschiera. The country is beautiful the lake of Garda and the mountains behind it were most lovely — we passed within three miles of the battlefield of Custozza — I had no wish to see it — the associations of misery and bloodshed were already too strong —

It was a beautiful moonlight night when we reached Vicenza which is a picturesque old Town we walked to the Hotel, a deserted dilapidated old Palazzo . . .

We passed many nice country houses on the river Brenta — amongst others Stia where the King has been staying. Every gateway and every house great and small had the welcome inscribed on its doorway “Italia Una — Vittoria Emanuele lo vogliamo Nostro Rè” The plebiscite or voting will soon take place here, and in a very few days the Italian troops will enter Venice — . . . I am glad to say that the Austrians and Italians are parting with good feeling — the officers are exchanging dinners and this Evening an Austrian is giving a dinner at this hotel to the french and Italians and the Austrian band is playing in our little garden — the housemaid said to me “Come and see the festa” so I went with her and had a peep from behind a screen at the happy family who were sitting at a round table — the Austrians in their white coats, and

the french in blue with red trousers and the Italians in blue. This sort of interchange of good feeling may be productive of good hereafter. No joyful demonstrations are made as yet the people have self command and are silent with bursting hearts. They stand in little groups to look at the Italian officers as they get out of their gondolas and whilst they lift their hats they *devour* them with their eyes . . .

I would not on any account move you from the sea *until* we are home again . . . you cannot wish to leave Aberystwith more than y^r Mum does to turn her steps homewards — for though I enjoy seeing Venice my heart is always longing for the sight of my dear ones, at the same time I sympathise with your Papa's deep interest in Italy at this great crisis . . . and it would be a pity to deprive him of a sight not to be seen again in our lives or perhaps for Centuries . . . we shan't leave you much longer in your little banishment, but remember that the more Sea you get now the less likely you are to leave Eastnor the rest of the winter, so every additional week now may be a greater gain than you think . . . I am so glad you have learnt a beautiful Andante and it is very nice of you to think of mentioning that Isabel knows the "Kyrie Eleison." I value hearing of each other from each of you and have sometimes felt the want of a mention of the one (who happens not to have written) by the Boo who has written.

Isabel replies:

My own Mum when you are once in England your child will get quite close to you . . . darling my teeth are very clean I hope you will see them soon . . . I am reading the 2 volumes of "Round the Sofa" and Addie is reading "Mrs. Haliburton's troubles" which she says is very amusing.

Back comes a letter from Lady Somers by return of post to Adeline:

I like so much hearing of y^r occupations, your music, work, drawing and reading but I *greatly* object to *all* novels and if you have not finished "Mrs Haliburton's troubles" shut the book and I beg you and Isabel not to open another novel or story of any sort *until* I see you, unless you get one by Miss Yonge or Miss Sewell or Sir W. Scott — but of *his* I do not wish you to read any but those you have read.

On this question of what books the children should read Lord Somers differed from his wife. In one of his letters to her he writes:

I am much obliged to Mrs. Lindsay for reading to the children, it is generally more interesting to children to read a book in common — For them one of W. Scott's novels is a far more wholesome style of reading than those religious sentimental

tales of Miss Yonge's or Miss Anybody — I do not want to tell the children to leave off reading those kind of books, but only not to put them in their way — They are great favourites with High Ch. people like the Giles, but their views of life and duty are more false and artificial than many trashy novels of a much inferior order.

He spoke to the wind. Lady Somers pursued her own way. She had no fear of mawkish sentimental tales, — what she dreaded was the poison of romantic ideas.

Then in a lovely late summer they came back to Eastnor, — of their three homes the one they like best. Here they stay, except for visits to the sea, for the next three years, till Isabel comes out.

Looked at from the outside their life in the Castle may have appeared to be like that of two fairy princesses, with their retinue of governesses and maids, their grooms and ponies and carriages, their constant change of beautiful and expensive clothes. There must have been girls of their own age in the neighborhood, girls in the Ledbury shops, or farm girls working in the fields, who, when they caught sight of the Ladies Isabel and Adeline driving past in their carriage, wondered with a thrill of awe what the happy state of being a Countess's daughter felt like.

It felt very dull. To Isabel it was rather like living on a chain held at the other end by the most affectionate, most beautiful, most generous and most exacting mother. At the age of sixteen she was no more free from restraint than she had been when she was five years old.

The staff of governesses, tutors, drawing masters, music masters changed, but the dreary routine of the schoolroom went on as before. Isabel, when she had finished practising on the piano after breakfast, might stand for a moment at the window of the Gothic drawing-room on a lovely summer morning, and think how delightful it would be to saunter out while the day was still cool, across the terrace and down to the lake. But she did not saunter out, she turned back to the schoolroom where Miss V. was waiting for her and French translation, and in the afternoon wrote to her mother:

It is the most lovely weather here but hot! May we not go out directly after Breakfast as when we go out at twelve it is so Boiling.

Two troubled letters from the girls to their mother show how petty and how explosive the atmosphere of a Victorian schoolroom might become.



EASTNOR CASTLE FROM THE LAKE



BADMINTON

I am *so sorry* I have offended Miss V. but I really thought I was doing right in trying to keep as much out of draughts as I can as I know you would wish it and though I know I have often been impertinent yet I myself *think* and *Miss V. told me at the time that I had not been so.* Darling Mum do believe me when I say that though I ought perhaps to have done what Miss V. wished yet I really know you would not have wished me to lie down if you had seen the draught coming through in that high wind. If I have done wrong I am very sorry the day before I lay down in my play time as Miss V. said she could not hear when I read out loud and I know you would not wish me to miss it altogether.

Your loving child

ISABEL

Adeline who always came to Isabel's aid in trouble wrote:

Tuesday

MY OWN DARLING MUMIE

Your letter arrived yesterday evening, we were very glad to hear that Virgie had spent an afternoon with you and that she is well and happy. I hope Papa is better again we were very sorry to hear he was not well on Sunday. This same post will probably bring you a letter from Miss Vickerman she is very angry with Isabel, because she asked Miss V. to let her lie down with her head

towards the door that goes into Miss V.'s room as there is not nearly so much draught there as from the window in these high winds Miss V. wants Isabel to lie on the window side because she could not hear her when she read out loud, Isabel therefore asked her to allow her to sit up while reading and lie down in her play time saying that you in talking of the draughts in the school-room had mentioned that she was to lie with her head to the window which she told Miss V. she was not at all impertinent, but Miss V. was *very* angry I *cannot* think why or account for her excessive disagreeableness since you went away — I think we can both say that we have tried to be good and to please her because we know that in pleasing her we please you.

Darling Mumie don't think we want to worry you with complaints, I thought I w^d tell you, I am sure Isabel tried not to be impertinent.

Goodbye darling Mumie

Your loving

ADDIE

Miss V. told I. she was not angry with her for being impertinent we are therefore quite at a loss to account for it.

Their cousin, Agneta Cocks, brought up in freedom and in the society of books, came to stay for the first time at Eastnor after she came out. She was surprised to find that her cousins, only a

few years younger than herself, were scarcely ever seen downstairs. They liked to come into her bedroom to see what she was going to wear in the evening, and to bring her flowers for her hair. Then they would stay and gossip a little about the people staying in the house.

Isabel, she thought, was very sharp and observant and a great mimic. They seemed to have no friends, very few books, and did not seem to do much except "walk in the garden and say how dull it was." Miss Agneta thought they were a little bit afraid of their beautiful Mama.

But seclusion in the schoolroom would have been no excuse for shyness. If it were necessary to entertain visitors in her absence Lady Somers expected her daughters to come out of the schoolroom and take her place with dignity.

A letter from Isabel describes such an occasion:

June 25 Thursday

MY DARLING DARLING MUM

Mr. Longfellow has just gone, it has been really an awful ordeal, as they came a party of 13! However I think it went off very well and the luncheon was very good. Mr. and Mrs. Pulling came and that helped rather. Mr. L. is an old man rather gruff but I sat next him at luncheon

and did my best to talk he was very abrupt at first but afterwards he warmed a little and was quite poetical about the pictures! He admired particularly the Giotto St. Catherine and the old pictures. Also Watts's head of Tennyson. I think they were altogether very much pleased. He brought 3 daughters most decided Americans but he himself was very gentlemanlike. We wore our white piquets.

These occasions were rare and the dull days were common.

It was a slight alleviation of their boredom to visit the old people in the cottages at Eastnor. Lady Somers included visiting the poor in her plan for their training in the art of being a great lady. To her romantic mind kindness and courtesy were, or should be, the outward and visible sign of noble birth. This romantic conception had suffered rude shocks at the hands of several English great ladies. With one at least she had argued that kind hearts were more than coronets, because life was drama and a coronet was only becoming above a gracious, smiling face.

In this she was perfectly sincere. Her own kindness always stood the test of personal sacrifice, and courtesy with her was never condescending; she had the French sense of equality; the dignity

of Monsieur *le charpentier* was as sacred in her eyes as that of Madame la Comtesse.

The two girls, each in her own basket kept for the purpose, carried puddings, jellies, grapes, with their mother's pensions, to the old and the sick. Isabel writes:

I had such a charming ride yesterday to Martha Morgan's and home by the Oberlisk. Poor woman! She suffers so dreadfully from neuralgia in her face for three months she has hardly slept! The cottage is very tumble down she seemed very glad of the money you sent her darling Mum it is nearly church time so I must leave off. Martha told me Mr. Wood had given her *Pills* for her face which did her no good. I am going to take her a Belladonna Plaster a *new* one which if it does her *no* good can do her *no* harm Cameron told me so.

Many governesses did not succeed in teaching her to spell, and her mother's constant reproofs for writing on the best note-paper never come to her mind till she has just finished another letter on the same best paper.

She has been reading, though she does not mention it, John Stuart Mill's Essays on "Liberty." Where she heard of it or how she got it she kept as secret as what she thought when she had read it. There was no one with whom she could discuss

such explosive matter. Their governess companion of these days was of the Charlotte Yonge school, and as she superintended their reading and was censor of all books that came into the school-room it is not likely that she recommended the "Radical Heretic." Lady Somers, who knew as little as the governess what was going on in Isabel's mind, writes:

I sent off some books yesterday thinking of your half holiday today. The little books you could read tomorrow the only one I read "the old Man's Home" is such a pretty story.

Isabel's robust conscience, having swallowed John Stuart Mill, hid him away in the secret recesses of her brain till she was free some day to tell somebody what an impression he had made on her mind.

Adeline had no heart for this sort of daring. Once, when she was seventeen, she discussed a forbidden subject (probably the subject of romance) with a cousin who was staying at Eastnor, and borrowed, without her mother's permission, a book that the cousin had been reading. But her conscience gave her no peace, till she had repented in dust and ashes and confessed.

I should not feel happy, (she writes,) unless I

told you that I felt how wrongly I have acted. Directly you spoke on Thursday I should have ceased all conversation with Virginia upon the subjects you disapprove of, but I liked to please myself better than you and I discussed them with her several times afterwards which I should never have done . . . I know it will be a long time before you can trust my promises or take my word again, of course this feeling makes me unhappy but I have brought it on myself and I do not want to try to escape from looking at the fact in the face.

As the time draws nearer when for Isabel schoolroom discipline must end, Lady Somers's letters become more insistent and more appealing. In spite of her forethought there is still so much to be done; she meets a virtuous child who seems "*heart and soul*" in all her lessons, and who tells she "delights in learning Latin," and another who talks in "a *hearty* way of applying to her music and *working on with all her might* an hour and a half a day to get a Master that would lead up to her having Halle;" and all this gives her a pang when she thinks of Isabel, — "perhaps my Isabel will get ambitions and put her shoulder to the wheel day by day without *flinching* for my sake — only put some of the *goodwill* into y^r studies that you do into *enjoyment*," she writes.

Next day health is uppermost in her anxieties.

I hope you will eat well and *slowly* at dinner — so much of your health and *nourishment of blood* depends on slow eating — make a note of this on the tablet of your mind for the love you bear your Mother.

A housekeeping letter from Isabel, written from Brighton where they are again breathing sea breezes, shows that they did eat well. Miss Berger is the governess in attendance, Elia and Paris are their maids.

It is bitter cold and the whole place is *covered* with snow. I am afraid you will think the bills *very heavy* for this last week as Miss Berger does not manage at all. What we have is very nice but we have always double as much as is necessary. Elia and Paris both say they cannot eat half we have and the rest is wasted! for instance on Sunday we had 2 soles for breakfast and a cold Pheasant Elia and Paris a sole for Lunch *a hot leg of mutton* and rowley powley. For dinner 2 soles another joint of boiled mutton with turnips 2 Pheasants and an Apple tart, so that in 1 day we consumed 5 soles 1 leg of mutton 1 shoulder of mutton 2 Pheasants one Apple tart and Rowley Powley Pudding . . .

We thought you would like to hear these things though we don't mean in the least to complain I am sure Miss Berger does all she can to make us

happy and comfortable. I hope all this will not worry you darling or make you anxious! I *am trying really* darling Mum to please you and have been doing my lessons well. darling Mum don't be anxious I *will* do my *very best*.

Once as a special treat, now that Isabel is almost eighteen, a rule is relaxed and a little dissipation is permitted, but with great precaution.

If it is a *mild night*, Lady Somers writes, and you have not the shadow of a cold and you and Annie wrap up like *Mummies*. Hoods over your heads and hats and veils and *grebe fur* round your throats *after your hood is put on* and you have the large carriage you may if you like go down to the night-school Monday night after dinner and stay a few minutes.

The night school was not five minutes walk from the Castle; Annie was their governess-companion.

Then a fresh anxiety crops up. The March Lambs, who have been so secluded that they have scarcely seen, much less spoken to, a male creature younger than their men-servants or their father's and mother's friends, now must meet and entertain a boy of their own age. The Rector of Eastnor introduces to the Rectory a new pupil who has come to read with him, Lord Edward Somerset, one of the Duke of Beaufort's sons.

Adeline writes:

EASTNOR CASTLE *March*

Your children are very well and enjoyed the Malvern drive very much. We had a game of tennis after luncheon they all went away at four o'clock. I think the pupils enjoyed themselves — Mrs. Pulling was still rather neuralgic so we had the carriage shut for her. It was a very nice day, I went with Mrs. Pulling and Annie and came back with May and Ld Edward, as we were driving back we were caught in a snow-storm but we had umbrellas and were immensely wrapped up, and the snow did not last long. We wore our velveteen costumes but took care not to crush them driving.

Isabel writes that Lord Edward has hurt his arm:

Poor Lord Edward's arm is so bad Mr. Wood saw him this morning and told him he must not think of riding when his horse comes down for at least 2 weeks.

Lady Somers writes:

I am sorry to hear of Lord Edward's arm being so bad poor boy — He would be sure to ride hard if he got on a horse so I suppose Mr. Wood will forbid his riding for a safe length of time — it is

an unfortunate anxiety for the Pullings on his first coming as of course it w^d be more comfortable for them that all should go well with him. However it is only a thing of time and patience from what I saw. I fancy he is a little restless for *amusement* and has not many resources in *himself* as an intellectual boy (like the Hitties dear Father was) would have.

And in her next letter:

I told your Papa how much young Ld E. had been with us he said it didn't signify as he was such a mere boy . . . mind darling you don't take it upon yourself to pay him any little attentions in word or manner — I saw you had the bit of oil silk I meant to give him on yr table where I suppose I left it last night — *if he asks for it* tell *Annie* to send it to him and don't put yourself forward for any civilities . . . attend to what I say in the spirit as well as the letter . . . go to bed early and keep a calm mind my sweet such as you can keep when you set guard over yourself.

Isabel replies:

We will attend to all you say darling Mum. I gave the oil silk to Hodges to address and send to the Rectory *before I got your letter* as Ld E. asked us for it, but you may be sure my darling

Mum we will do everything we can do to please you and as you would like.

In the autumn Lord and Lady Somers depart to St. Moritz. Before going abroad Lady Somers had as usual planned and carefully arranged her daughters' movements while she is away.

They are to go first to London to the dentist; then to Aunt Mia at Saxonbury before going to Worthing for their autumn blast of sea breezes. They are left as usual in the care of Miss D. — “Annie.” Isabel, who is now eighteen, dares to make a slight alteration in her mother's plans. From St. Moritz comes a deluge of letters which, taking this disobedience for a text, search out all the secret faults of her character.

I received your letter . . . yesterday. I am sorry to say that nothing you have written me exculpates you from the blame your Papa and I have seen reason to attach to you. We were loth to think that you did your share in managing to get to Saxonbury *alone* and to shake off Miss D and Addie by managing for them to go to Penmaenmawr without you . . . in fact what was at the bottom of your heart was to set yourself free of Annie's charge . . . I have been much distressed at your having let yourself go to act thus. I only hope you will *see* it, admit it, and resolve

to try never to intrigue to have your own way again. I assure you your Papa has been angry with you and you must not commit these grave faults that are faults of character and principle . . .

My darling child I can see how it all came about and the fact of your paying a visit to Aunt Mia seems a harmless thing to object to — but it *was important* if it involved during our absence abroad your separating y^rself from the person in whose charge we had placed you. I would advise you to do your best to abide by Miss D.'s authority and in fact *to do her justice as Addie does if you wish to please your Papa and me*. Do not look at her from a critical point of view always *pulling* steadily against her, instead of *turning your heart loyally to let her rule you as young people should be ruled*.

Then, as the storm blows over:

We incline to Worthing as the sands are good, drains good, downs for riding good, doctors at hand, distance small . . .

If you find it getting cold for washing dresses wear your spotted blk silks, . . . Be careful to hold the rails of the staircase at Saxonbury, it is such a dangerous bit of stairs.

A fortnight later she writes:

My own children the Mother is rejoiced to think of your *breathing* sea breezes. I do hope

you may have fine weather as that is everything. I have had a note from Aunt Sara this Evening abt May going to you. She tells me to telegraph if we object to her joining you and that she will understand our *silence* as *consent*, so little May will join you and I hope she may enjoy herself dear little one. We are much pleased with your's and Marmoo's promises that you will not let her being with you interfere with the *spirit* of your studies — and what I am *equally* anxious abt is that you *both* should take care not to give yourselves up to her so much as to make Annie feel *left out* of your talks, your fun, and your demonstrations of affection — I do beg of you both to love May sensibly, and it is a lesson to learn in life not to lavish fondness on one object to the hurting the feelings of those who stand by and love you and are loved by you at other times. If as you tell me poor Annie is in low spirits it is all the more necessary you should both comfort her by *making much* of her and inducing May to do the same . . .

It is so nice to hear that you have a good flat and with ponies Mrs. Sims and the good Sims Elia etc about you it will not seem lonely and I hope Annie will be happy and well too . . .

I did not mean you to leave off your singing. I only meant that if there was not opportunity for both to give the preference to playing — you may sing — but don't go higher than E as Annie promised me.

Heaven bless you and God give you *both* His grace, and put it in your hearts to seek it and hold and cherish it and to put away all evil from you

Your own loving
devoted MOTHER

I think it would be a good thing to let down the tucks of your flannel petticoats which I think must be getting short, warmth round the knees keeps off many a chill, I speak for both of you.

CHAPTER IV

COMING OUT

AT LAST, when she is almost nineteen, the time has come when the first March Lamb is to leave the schoolroom and enter the great world of clever, brilliant, beautiful people, for whose society such a long and weary preparation has been necessary. She is to be a child no longer but a young woman, meeting men and women on their own ground. If there is something rather frightening in this, the thought that there is to be no more wearying restraint and no more drab governesses, but freedom, balls, excitement, friends, is a dazzling prospect.

Her first Hunt Ball was one of the stepping-stones between the schoolroom and her presentation in London, and for this she had her first long dress. Some time before, when she had come back to Eastnor after a visit to Paris with her mother, she had told Edith Pulling that her dresses from now on were to be only "three inches from the ground." The night of the Hunt Ball, while the Castle party waited in the great hall for

the carriages, Isabel was walking proudly up and down swishing her long skirt, — her delight in it not the least damped by her father's repeated criticism that it was far too long to be pretty.

Before her presentation at Court she had lessons in curtseying and there were rehearsals in the hall at Eastnor when Edith or Emily Pulling or Adeline took the part of Queen Victoria and Isabel played her own part of *débutante*.

When the great moment came at last, she was frightened and shy. She had lost the calm self-possession with which at the age of four she had set Her Majesty right. This time Her Majesty scored. When the shy girl curtseyed the Queen said with a smile, "*Lady Isabel.*"

The coming-out ball at her own home was not so terrifying. There are five letters, incomplete, from Isabel in Society in London to Adeline in the schoolroom in the country, describing her new experiences.

The first letter written the day after her coming-out ball: given the night the news of the declaration of war between France and Germany reached England.

49 PRINCES GATE

Friday

MY OWN DARLING NAT

I got your letter today and was so delighted to hear from my own Nat. Everything went off very well last night on the whole. Mama and I had both new gowns from Le B— her's was white silk and white crepe with black velvet — mine was white tulle with wreaths and wreaths of Jessamine.

The Tent for the supper was magnificent.

Lumley and Torrington spent nearly the whole day with us! Elizabeth Campbell came to luncheon — she was very nice indeed and she and I sat together in Mama's boudoir upstairs w^h Mama had had most beautifully arranged for the Prince to smoke in — Mama was most fearfully busy all day —

Elizabeth could not come to the ball nor either of her brothers as it was the day of the Duchess of Norfolk's funeral.

All the supper Tent was hung with Eastnor Tapestry and the windows of the drawingrooms were taken out and trellices of Lilies were put instead.

At 11.Oc. the Pullings arrived. We were in the drawingroom with them when the Princess Marguerite and the Duc de Nemours arrived we all had a fearful half hour with the Nemours and the Pullings.

Gradually the people began to appear and soon the rooms were quite full.

I danced the first dance with Dufferin who was most sweet — we did not wait for the Prince, when he arrived I danced with him. Everybody danced violently till supper and I danced every dance.

V. was there looking very nice indeed all in white and May. the supper was opened and everybody herded down the royalties in the Tent and select tables.

I went down to supper with Roden — and danced with McDuff, Morley, Teck, Spanish Ambassador, Conte de Paris.

Lord Henry was horrified at seeing Mrs. Pulling. Poor Lord Edward was not allowed to stay in town for the ball.

We left off dancing at 5.30, then we went down to a kind of breakfast supper and the Prince left at 6. I was not in bed till past seven.

There were a great many men w^h is always a great thing at a ball, and everybody danced a great deal.

Julia was there and H. D. and H. F.

Darling, Mama and I are nearly dead today, we went to a horrid afternoon party at Mrs. Gladstone's.

I am so longing to see my own poor little one but have such a dreadful headache today can hardly see. Mama crushed with fatigue. We go from Saturday to Monday to Strawberry Hill. Will write tomorrow.

Not a word of the great news of the evening that explains "the fearful half hour" in the drawingroom. The French Royalties arrived hot-foot to discuss with Lord Somers the news of war between France and Germany; but dare not hint in the presence of strangers at what was uppermost in their minds. It was not till the ball was over that they were able over the breakfast-supper to talk of the chances this war might throw in their way.

The second letter:

Monday

MY OWN DARLING NAT

You must have thought it so unkind of me not to have written to you yesterday but in the early part of the afternoon I felt so disinclined to sit down to write and afterwards I went out and stayed out till dinner time. We arrived at Strawberry Hill on Saturday dressed for dinner then we find the Bernal Osborne girls — the Roses (old couple) a great many Irishmen and L^d Lorne and Hayward. I went in to dinner with Lorne and had a charming dinner.

In the evening he came and sat with Mama and me in the back drawingroom and was very nice. The next day Sunday we all went to rather a dreary Church where we heard the most fearful political sermon about this horrid war — in the

early part of the afternoon all the men smoked in the garden and Mama and I went up to our rooms.

Then I went out boating with the 2 Miss Osbornes and Lorne and L^d Monck's son, (commonly called Monkey) rowed. It was such a charming evening we rowed down to Richmond the Miss O's are a little fast they are Irish.

I sat next Lorne again at dinner and in the evening we sat in the garden. he is going off to Prussia soon to see the war.

Poor old Lady Mex. is dead so that we can go to no balls this week. L^d Lorne came back with us in the carriage this morning. I rode with Coutts this afternoon and met Libbie Campbell and rode with her for some time.

It was at this party that Lady Isabel drew down on her head one of the worst scoldings she ever received from her mother. In those days the high-born indulged in simple pleasures that would not be enjoyed at a children's party to-day. One of these was a taste for round games in the drawing-room after dinner. This night they played a game called "Wishes." Each one in turn must truthfully declare the cherished wish of his or her heart. Lady Isabel, sitting on a sofa by her mother's side, waited eagerly for her turn; she loved round games and she had a real cherished wish, — "To live

in the country," she declared, "and to have fifteen children." This was received with such applause that she thought she must be on the high road to social success, but her little bubble of conceit was pricked when they went upstairs to bed; and she cried herself to sleep with her mother's words in her ears, - - "of all the horrible indecent things for a young girl to say. What do you suppose they will think of the Mother who has brought up such an indelicate daughter?"

Third letter:

Thursday

MY OWN DARLING NAT

Here I sit down again my darling to give you more of our news — I was so delighted to get another letter from you this morning and to hear that my Nat was well and happy. I went to Lady Margaret's last night and enjoyed myself very much indeed.

Mama and Papa went there to dinner and I went in the Evening. Reynier came to do my hair at 9 he did it the same as the drawingroom with 3 pink rosebuds — I wore a white tarlatan, low — that Gillot has made me with another rose on one shoulder it looked very nice — Mama wore her black velvet.

I went to G. P.¹ to show myself before I went

¹ Grosvenor Place where her grandmother lived.

and then on to Ly Margaret's. I was very much frightened but however Mama was waiting on the stairs for me and took me in. It was a great crush — I was introduced to Sir H. Walpole Mr. Flemming (who is all paint and wig you never saw anything like it) — Lady S. de Radcliffe Ly Waldegrave, Teck, the Conte de Paris — etc. they were there also — the Comptons, Lord Lansdowne, the Contesse de Paris the Queen of Holland who has taken a great fancy to Mama and asked for her photograph — Princess Mary who talked a great deal to Mama, Vernon Harcourt, L^d Lorne Ly Beckensfield (Mrs. Dizzy) who is the most fearful looking old thing — Lady Cook L^d Cook and Alice and Charles Gurney. Alice magnificently dressed in white satin embroidered with gold. Mrs. Sims Egerton L^y M Beaumont had a beautiful gown on a pale mauve satin — there were loads of other people there darling whom I can't remember. Young Lady Wentworth who is considered a beauty is very pretty but she makes her head such a fearful size with a perfect mountain of curls and she has a sister who is not nearly so pretty and dreadfully painted —

Alice looked very well last night — We have had Foz. and Mrs Foz. and Miss Foz. to lunch and Georgy Gordon and Charles Cocks poor old Fosberry is so deaf that he cannot hear except through a speaking trumpet —

Mama and I are now going out darling — to-

morrow we go to a drum at Lady Strafford's and on Saturday to dinner at L^y Waldegrave's.

My darling Nat I shall see you on Monday and then I can tell you more a thousand kisses darling and my best love to Annie

Ever my darling Your own loving
NELL

Adeline replies from the country where it is "so dull":

Saturday

DARLING LITTLE ONE,

I think you will like to have a letter from your Nat, but I have really nothing to tell you. I have got another styne, it is a bore is it not? The weather is too cold to sit out. I have to thank you for your letter yesterday I hope you will enjoy the Dinner tonight at the Ashburnam's. Uncle J. has been reading out loud to me this morning the Death of Socrates from Plato, it was very interesting.

I am not able to read much with my eye or draw. "Pity me Nelly ere I die. Putting my foot in it alway I am!!" I can remember no more you will.

You will write to me tomorrow will you not? We had such a storm the other day, it has been quite cold since. What a relief to you in London. Goodbye my Little One

Your loving NAT

I have that melancholy expression in one eye you used to laugh at!

Fourth letter from Isabel in London:

My own darling Nat I was so glad to get your nice long letter this morning and hear how much better you were poor darling — Mama and I are fearfully tired we had an odious ball at Strawberry Hill yesterday it was a perfect mob and the heat was enough to send one out of one's senses. I hardly danced at all as we could not bear the heat of the ballroom. — I danced with Dufferin and Silchester and I went in to supper with Lorne. The gardens were most beautifully lit with different coloured lamps and everybody walked about in them it was such a lovely night we were home about 5 oc —

tomorrow is the Windsor breakfast. I am having my gown from Le Blond's such a lovely white muslin with a white bonnet trimmed with Jessamine. Papa is still too lame to go he can still walk so little — Your Tussock gown and the eye fountain are going off to you tomorrow darling — I am so tired darling tonight but will write a longer letter tomorrow.

Keep well darling — Mama sends you her fond love and kisses ever your most

loving NELL

My darling don't think this too short a letter from your most devoted Nell.

Fifth letter:

49 PRINCES GATE.
Thursday 30

MY OWN DARLING NAT,

I am so sorry I could not write to you yesterday darling one but I had a good deal to do and was very tired in the evening, our tea went off very well as Mama will have told you and she has probably told you all about it my darling.

Today I went out driving with Lady Elizabeth Campbell she is such a nice girl, you would like her so much. I went to fetch her at Argyle Lodge where I saw Lord George who is lost in admiration of our turn out.

We went to the Rose Show yesterday afternoon with Elizabeth and L^d George, Roden and L^d Hardinge. She enjoyed herself immensely poor little thing. There was a ball last night at the Mayer Rothschilds to w^h we were asked but we did not go as we were tired. Mama says that she will write tomorrow to say if we are coming on Saturday We have no engagements at present. Papa is gone to Dover or Ryde — his knee is still very bad. We are going to Lady Molesworth's ball tonight and to Marlborough House next week to Lady Westminster's on Monday Lady Warncliffe's dinner tomorrow. My darling little one I am looking forward so much to seeing you I do hope with all my heart we shall go to Saxonbury on Saturday. I am quite pining to

see you again don't think me unkind darling I have not given you much news I wore my white muslin yesterday with the bows it looked very nice Bless you my own little one I love you dearly Don't be a lonely creature we are coming on Saturday

Lady Somers had succeeded in keeping her daughter in complete ignorance of life; she had also kept her unspoilt and unconscious of her attractions. Her parents loomed too large on her horizon for her to think anything of herself. In her honest mind she transferred to them whatever attention or admiration came to her from being her father's heiress or her mother's beautifully dressed daughter.

Years afterwards Lady Mary von Hügel told Duchess Adeline that in those days she called Lady Isabel "the little foal," because she used to run at her Mother's side.

She was indeed tied to her mother's apron string. Even the romance of falling in love, that she was expecting, was more in her mother's hands than hers, — a young girl must not "put herself forward for any civilities."

That she herself, apart from wealth, position and fine clothes, was a desirable young person, — of this she was quite unconscious.

Another contemporary who saw her at this time at a Court Ball says, "I remember being particularly struck by the brilliance of her complexion, a vivid geranium pink, and the glory of her hair which was a rich chestnut."

She was vivid in temperament as well as in appearance, full of vitality with the fresh mind of a child to whom everything is new and amazingly interesting.

The young men who came from worldly motives to be introduced to the heiress, remained from human motives to fall in love with the girl. There is no doubt she was more attracted to Lord Lorne than any of the others. She had seen a good deal of him since he sat with her and her mother in the back drawing-room at Strawberry Hill, and he appeared to be attracted to her.

She was too young and inexperienced to help a lover out, but without her help things had got so far that she was expecting him to propose. Then one morning he arrived. As it happened she was sitting that morning to Mr. Watts, who was painting her portrait. The young man sat in a room all the morning with her. They were alone except for Mr. Watts, but he, intent on his "aim and feeling in art," was conscious of no other aim and feeling; even when Lady Isabel com-

plained of being tired he kept her posing, and at last the young man must go. If it had been his intention to propose to her, he did not get another opportunity. Almost directly after he left he was summoned to Queen Victoria, who had arranged other plans for his happiness. The girl was hurt; she had cared for him and was ready to care much more. She was bewildered too by the ethics of that strange Power at Buckingham Palace, and she loved it none the better for having, as she imagined, filched her lover from her.

When other suitors came she rejected them all. She was out of conceit with romance. One was refused because he was not religious, another because his religion was the wrong kind, and another because sitting beside her at dinner one night he asked her if he might eat a bit of turtle she had left untouched on her plate. As he lifted the morsel of green fat on his fork she mentally struck his name off her list of possible husbands.

Another rejected suitor was Lord Henry Somerset. He then announced his intention of withdrawing from the world and devoting his life to philanthropy. From now, the letters as one reads them slowly develop the coming tragedy. Not that anyone thought of tragedy at the time. Everything seemed to be working out beautifully

and all for the best. Just before Lady Isabel's coming out Mr. Stanton had been to Eastnor. A letter from Adeline to her grandmother describes his visit:

We did not have anybody in the house till last Friday when Mr. Talbot came and on Saturday Mr. Stanton (one of the S. Alban's clergy, and a great friend of Aunt Sophie's and Mr. Talbot's) arrived from Cheltenham, where he had been preaching. We all liked him so much, he is a charming man, so genial and full of fun, and so very good and hard working. In fact he said it was years since he had had such a rest as the three days he spent here, except the month's holiday he takes once a year for his health, for he is not at all strong.

We wanted him very much to preach on Sunday, but he begged to be let off preaching as he was quite worn out by work. However on Saturday evening he went with Mama to the night-school where he took a class and spoke to all the boys so nicely that Mama begged him to give them an address on Sunday evening in the school, which he did. It was intended at first only for the boys and men belonging to the school, but after Church a great many of the poor people heard of it, and the schoolroom was quite full, so full that a great many people were obliged to stand in the door. We all went, and Mr. Stanton spoke so

beautifully, that I am sure it must have done everyone good to hear him — Several hymns were sung, hymns that everyone present knew and everybody sang. You can't think how nice it was, and I think all the poor people enjoyed the service. He went away on Tuesday, as he is obliged to go back to London.

Again the desire to "be really good," so long harboured in the back of Isabel's mind, once more entirely possessed her thoughts.

And now, after two London seasons, her knowledge of the world had shown her that she must not expect romance in the innocent simplicity with which she had expected it at first.

There was no possibility of her becoming a sister of mercy; because of her position as an heiress she must marry; but she could at least marry a good man and have a large family of children to whom she would devote herself. All that she would ask of the man she married was to be made quite sure that he was good.

Lord Henry Somerset came to Eastnor, proposed again and was accepted.

There was not a trace of worldliness in her choice. Lord Henry was a second son, and he had no fortune of his own. What weighed with her in accepting him was his assurance that he

shared her ambition to be good, and her mother's wish that she should marry him. Lady Somers is supposed to have made the match because she hated the thought of parting with her daughter, and saw, in this marriage with a second son who was tractable, a possibility of keeping both her daughter and her son-in-law under her own wing.

No doubt this is true, but it does not shut out the possibility of her being well pleased that her daughter should marry into one of the oldest and most powerful families in England. Here again Lord Somers did not see eye to eye with his wife. His judgment had been overruled in the matter of his children's education, it was overruled now in the matter of this marriage.

So on a February morning in 1872, six months before Lady Isabel came of age, she was married in St. George's Church, Hanover Square, her six bridesmaids dressed in white silk, with white tip-pets and sky blue silk hats, and she herself carrying a basket of snowdrops that had been gathered for her that morning in his garden by Lord Tennyson.

When the wedding breakfast was over and the bride came down, dressed in blue velvet and fur, to go away, a girl friend noticed that she clung to her mother as if she were afraid to leave her.



THE LADY ISABEL SOMERS-COCKS
before her marriage to Lord Henry Somerset
From the painting by G. F. Watts

The change from Eastnor to Badminton was amazing. Eastnor, with its atmosphere of culture and refinement and shelter from the rude facts of life, had one great fault. It was too safe. Its shelter had been enervating. Badminton was not enervating.

Only an English ear will respond to the deep significance of the word Badminton. In the hearts of the English the home of the Beaufort family stood for all that was most characteristic of life in England. The counties, north, south, east, and west, looked to Badminton for the standard of excellence in all that belonged to the nation's sport. Badminton was a kingdom in itself with roots centuries deep in the past; and unlike royal families, who change with changing years, the Beauforts had remained and their tastes had remained and were the cherished tastes of their countrymen. To this day the name of this great family is repeated almost with reverence (not on account of its sanctity), and one would be a creature with no perception of values if one did not draw a deep breath of wonder at the extraordinary richness and complexity of that human web of life. Among the innumerable letters left by Lady Somers three loose sheets in a large flowing handwriting turned out to be letters from the Duchess

of Beaufort (Lady Isabel's future mother-in-law) to one of her sons.

They are included here for the sake of the delightful picture they give of the Duchess herself and their description of the interests and pursuits of her family.

TROY HOUSE

Sept. 20, 1867

The Races are over and Tebbitta won, and has the cup!!! Imagine his delight! It was a good Race and he rode it capitally but we were hardly ever in doubt abt the result Arah na Pogue winning "hands down" and easily at last. I thought he w^d have cried when a crowd rushed to meet him and brought him in to weigh with shouts and cheers! He was very quiet and modest w^h increased the enthusiasm, of course I gave him his cup, and kissed him before the assembled multitudes w^h again brought down cheers of delight —

Quite a great day for Monmouth! Tebbitta will sleep tonight. I don't think he has had a good night since it was first settled that he shd ride this famous Race. He goes with me to Gopsall on Monday . . .

Tebbitta leaves Gopsall on Wedy poor dear thing and is getting very low at the prospect, tho' this Cup to take with him is an immense salve to the wound of leaving home.

All here have settled to march after you. The

Rolls and Herberts in particular. Miss Josephine is a great beauty and looked charming at the Ball last night. It was less well attended than usual I think — but it was a good Ball, I believe. We all went and I danced four times!

Y^r own MOTHER

Tebbitta wore Father's colours.

TROY HOUSE

Aug. 2, 1869

What wonderful marriages the Hamiltons make, Maud's to L^d Lansdowne is now announced by Maud herself to y^r GrandPapa, who is instantly very busy about Bracelets for them, (Maud and Bertha) I must say I can't bear Bertha's marriage to that horrible little mad Scamp, but perhaps he will reform now. Let us hope so. At all events he has shown good taste in his choice of a Wife.

Maud will be almost a neighbour at Bowood. That is a charming marriage I think. How pleased Lady Landsowne must be, I sh^d think.

Oh! dear I shall have to fork out two Presents, a fearful blow, but they are such nice dears.

Father went to Town today till Thursday, when he returns and brings ——— and we entertain the Judges on Friday. Gillery Pigott again but not dear Byles I am sorry to say, — a new Judge Mr Montague Smith I think, is the 2nd on the Circuit this year. There are two Prisoners for murder w^h much excite the Family. I hope ——— will be in time for the Trials, she enjoys

it all so. I have ascertained to my delight that any hanging there may be will be done at Usk. I could not be here if they were to hang a man at the Monmouth Gaol. It is so very near!

I am writing this at night, or rather after dinner, while the young persons are engaged taking a Wasp's Nest all part of the Troy programme! There has been Cricket and Fishing and dabbling and now we wind up with a Wasp's Nest, a really happy day!

Widjer has suffered much from a Dew Claw w^h has come out and he has had a gathering in the place since which the Vet^y Surgeon in Monmouth has lanced amidst piercing yells from Droly Boy.

That beloved Stranger was naughty today — fighting with M^r Hewett's dogs and was accordingly thumped and banded by Miss Mibbit with an Umbrella and seriously spoken to with much success. He has been an Angel ever since and while I write sleeps valiantly by my side, to protect me from any Tramps that might look in at the Perron Door upon my solitude. He becomes quite a Lion under such circumstances and causes much consternation in the Trampian breast by reason of his fierce appearance!

What a young man would have found, going from such a home as Eastnor to a university, Lady Isabel found when she married and came to Badminton. But no young man ever went to

a university so unprepared for life as this young girl, brought up on sentiment and Miss Yonge's novels, and it is a proof of the quality of her mind that Miss Yonge and the Miss Anybodies went under at once. She saw almost at the first glance that life here was nearer to reality than anything she had seen or heard of before; though nothing in her limited experience had warned her of the strange incongruity of reality, she found herself prepared for it. Her mind, that had been starved in her Victorian schoolroom, basked in the eighteenth-century freedom of Badminton. To this old world, that was amazingly new to her, she brought no narrow schoolgirlish judgments, but unconsciously trusted her instinct for human values.

That her father-in-law, the Duke, should weep openly in the presence of his family when his mistress deserted him, and feel the need of sympathy so much that he called his grooms and stablemen to come with him to church next Sunday to take the Holy Communion with him, because "his Little Nellie had left him," showed a tangle of motives that in her affection for him she almost understood.

To the Duke she owed one of the greatest pleasures of her new life — horses at her own com-

mand. As the Duchess writes he "went to town after hunting . . . to choose a Stepper for Isabel's day Horse, and a Drudge for the night work." The Stepper she drove to church to the early service. Ever since her childhood she longed to go to church alone and to say her prayers alone, and now for the first time in her life she was free to go. On Sundays she went a second time to church with the family after breakfast and sat with her tall brothers-in-law who, when the sermon began and the Duke and the Duchess sat back in their armchairs, stretched themselves full length at the far end of the vast pew and slept.

This was a far cry from St. Paul's Church, Brighton, and a mother's spirit hovering near her. But she would not have exchanged the present for the past. She had not lost sight of her ambition to be good, but her views on all that was involved in being good had widened far beyond her Eastnor horizon.

There was something in the joy of life (when you were free from governesses), its gaiety and laughter, that was goodness in itself. Her vitality, her gaiety and laughter had full scope in the society of these brothers-in-law. She owed a great deal of the wide tolerant outlook that distinguished her later, to her affection for them

and their influence on her mind. The contrast between the manners and customs of Badminton and those of Eastnor amused her. There was more real grandeur at Badminton, a greater atmosphere of consequence. Even to see the horses, two hundred or more, go out in the morning from the stables with the grooms for exercise across the park, was to impress this on your mind.

But though there was less grandeur at Eastnor there was, she thought, a refinement that Badminton sometimes lacked. A drunken guest for instance would not have been tolerated at Eastnor.

Only once before in her life had she seen a drunken man, and that was when she and Adeline were children in lodgings at Brighton. An old butler, who had been drinking, came into their sitting room and got under the table while they were playing a duet on the piano. She and Adeline were so much interested and amused that they described the scene to their mother when they wrote. To their regret Lady Somers had removed them at once from the lodgings, where they were very comfortable, and had forbidden them to mention the incident again.

The Duchess's affectionate rule over a young daughter-in-law left her almost unlimited freedom. She asserted her authority only by insisting on

Lady Henry's wearing white kid gloves at all times in the house.

Lady Henry used to sit at her embroidery in one of the few sunny rooms at Badminton. (The house, built by a former Duchess, was so carefully arranged that only corridors and passages catch the sun.) This drawing-room looked out on a quadrangle where, as she worked, the peacocks strutting under a beautiful old cedar tree deafened her with their screams. If the Duchess came in and found her working with bare fingers she would say, "Quaily, your gloves!" Quaily was the Duke's name for his daughter-in-law because she was brown-haired and "plump as a quail."

The Duchess laid great stress on refinement in her dominion. White hands, beautiful manners, and the grace of not seeing what a gentlewoman should not see,—these she insisted on.

The Victorian grace of blindness she herself had practised till it had reached the level of heroism. When the Duke sent down from London a large framed portrait of his mistress she was able to admire it in the presence of her family and even propose to hang "this fancy portrait" in the drawing-room. The family entrusted to their sister-in-law the delicate task of persuading their mother

to hang it in a less public place. The Duchess yielded and hung it in the Duke's bedroom as a "pleasant surprise for him when he came home."

This was her attitude when some flagrant misdemeanour caught her unawares. One night at dinner a man rolled under the table before the ladies had risen, and dragged the cloth with all that was on it after him, under their eyes. The Duchess sat unmoved and not one of them dared admit by even the quiver of an eyelid that anything had happened.

Lady Henry admired her mother-in-law's courage. Her own taste was for reticence in intimate relations, and when nothing could be gained by volubility, silence in small matters made life pleasanter for other people, and to be able to count on it in great matters was an immense relief.

All this time she herself was silent about her disappointment in her marriage. It was no more than a disappointment at first, while she was enjoying her new experience of freedom; but later the truth that she was not happy with her husband had to be faced. Her child had been born in 1874, two years after her marriage. Before long her suffering became obvious not only to her own family but to her husband's.

In October 1877 the Duchess of Beaufort wrote to her:

BADMINTON,
Oct. 28, 1877

MY DEAREST QUAILY

I am grieved beyond words, but not surprised at your poor touching letter. You have always been most kind in trying to screen Penna¹ from the very natural and just wrath of your Father and Mother at the treatment you receive at his hands, but as you say there is a limit, and we do not wonder at your complaining to them nor at their feeling the resentment *every* parent *would* feel.

We have nothing whatever to say in defence of Penna and unless he is mad cannot understand his behaviour. Be quite sure of this you dear that nothing can ever make any difference in our great affection for you. If you were our own child we could not love you more, and whatever altered circumstances Penna's conduct may bring about, you must always look upon this as your second home, and believe that you are as welcome a sight to us as you have always been. "She is the sunshine of our house" the Duke always says, and all the boys feel the same. It makes the whole difference to us all when you are here you Dear.

We are bitterly grieved and ashamed that anyone belonging to us should treat you as Penna

¹ Penna was Lord Henry's name among his family.

has. I trust your father is well and that Lady Somers has recovered from her cold. Please give them both my love. They were so kind to us always and that our own belonging should repay them thus.

And again:

BADMINTON,
No^r 1 1877

DEAREST QUAILY

I have your poor patient letter and with a broken heart thank you for it. God bless you my poor dear

Your most affectionate
MOTHER-LAW

The Duke's counsel to his son was to "pull himself together"; "Isabel's conduct is irreproachable," he wrote. "You will never get the child in any Court of Law — a man may get tired of his wife but your conduct and language is not that of a gentleman."

If at this stage Lady Henry could have put herself into the hands of the Beauforts and left them to arrange a separation, both families might have been spared the misery of a public scandal.

All she desired was to escape quietly with her child from an intolerable situation and keep the friendship of her husband's people.

Lady Somers in a letter to Louisa Marchioness of Waterford, writes:

We have sealed our lips even to our very nearest and dearest belongings because we have by so doing carried out Isabel's wish . . . Isabel has felt bound in honour to abstain from saying a single word to any human being about her misery . . . the sight of her poor little careworn miserable face is almost more than we can bear.

But just when her husband's pride seemed to make a peaceable settlement impossible, Lady Somers, who was abroad, hurried home, and with her usual impetuosity and alas, her love of drama, took control. Her imagination soon created an atmosphere of peril from which her daughter must be rescued at once. Acting on Lady Somers's advice Lady Henry took her child, left her own house, and put him in the care of her father and mother. By this apparently simple act she put herself legally in the wrong. For according to the Common Law "the father is the guardian by nature and by nurture and his rights are to be considered primary."

The father in this case immediately applied for a Writ of Habeas Corpus to restore to him the custody of the child, and as a counterblast a

petition was filed in the Chancery Court by the mother for permission to keep the child.

The sixth of May was an anniversary Lady Henry never forgot. It was on that day in 1878 that she waited in anguish at Reigate Priory, while legal gentlemen debated in Westminster Hall as to whether or not it was according to the law of England that she should keep her child. This Court was not considering the right or wrong of her cause but only its legality. But one legal mind so far forgot itself, when the evidence added detail after detail of the suffering she had borne so patiently, as to turn indignantly to a certain group of men who were present in the Court and ask, "Was there not a gentlemen among you?"

If a future generation unearths and reads Mr. Justice Field's Judgment it will be to marvel at the Victorian mind's respect for class privilege.

He admits the truth of the statements on Lady Henry's side; he says:

Can I come to the conclusion that she was wrong and behaving otherwise than a wife should do, or otherwise than a respectable, honest, and good-feeling wife should do in going away and sending the child to her father and mother? I have looked

at this part of the case in every way. I have desired to arrive at a fair and just conclusion; but I am bound to say that under the circumstances, I cannot find such fault with her for that, as to be able to hold that her custody is improper or that the child still remains in the custody of her husband. I shall hold the child to be in her custody within the meaning of the Statute.

Having reached this stage he appears to have trembled on the bench at the thought of the great family he is daring to offend. He goes on:

I quite enter into the feelings of Lord Henry Somerset . . . I have given him a decision which I fear may disappoint him. I am of course only responsible to my own conscience for doing the best I can upon that point.

The child is to remain in the custody of the mother but he is not to be cut off from his father or the Beaufort family.

Badminton and Troy are places which he shall visit freely and easily . . . arrangements may be made by agreement or by order if necessary as shall ensure that he is brought up not merely as a Cocks or a Somers, but as a Plantagenet.

It may have been the judgment of a Solomon, but Mr. Justice Field dared to go further than Solomon. He cut the child in two.

This judgment need not have been accepted as final. Lady Henry might have instituted proceedings for a divorce to prove her right to her entire possession of her child.

She was at first torn by doubts as to what was the right thing to do. She disapproved of divorce because she believed it was against the law of the Church. But she was told that in such a case as this even the Church of Rome would annul a marriage. This argument may have been used by Lady Somers, whose one desire was to see her daughter freed from the trammels of a mere separation. But it seems that from now Lady Henry cut herself free from her mother's control.

It may have been on her father's advice that she consulted Lord Selborne, not as to what she might do legally but as to what, setting her own rights aside, she ought to do for the sake of her child.

To make doubly sure she consulted her uncle Canon Courtenay, a quiet, saintly old gentleman who served a country parish and also the Court at Windsor.

Canon Courtenay's letter has been preserved.

BOVEY TRACEY

Wed^y July 10 — 78

MY DEAR ISABEL

Many thanks for your affectionate letter — I fear that I may have sometimes troubled you by differing from you, but you know that if I had done so, it has been in affection for you, and briefly as a matter of judgment — when once such a man as Lord Selborne gave advice there could be no doubt, I think, as to the right, and the expediency of following it. So you may rest in the comfort of having sought, and followed, the best advice. This gives one good hope, that all will be overruled for good — . . .

I do indeed heartily sympathise with you in a trouble such as comes upon few: it could not be so, did not God mean some great good to come out of it — But it needs a great deal of patience, and trust and love, and prayer. May God comfort and help you.

Much love

ever your aff^{cte} Uncle

C. L. COURTENAY.

She was immensely relieved that both these good men had advised her to do what she herself had felt all along was best; her own instinct had been for silence. She accepted the position and a separation was arranged quietly. If she

had hoped that her forbearance would put an end to strife she was disappointed. She had the strange experience that seems to come without fail to everyone who first attempts to practise the precepts of Christ. Wrath by her meekness was not driven away; it turned to rend her.

It was not a difficult thing to do. Above all things the Victorian world hated a scandal. No one mentioned this great social cataclysm openly, but privately it was discussed with avidity, and the underground reverberations reached the remotest village in England. The rumblings have scarcely died away yet. There may still be old ladies living in Bournemouth, or in the provinces, who in their youth sang Lord Henry's songs, still holding to their opinion that the man who wrote those charming songs was the heart-broken victim of an evil-minded wife.

But it was not only the young ladies who sang sentimental songs who held that opinion. Everyone who did not understand what had happened believed this to be the truth. Something "that was only mentioned in the Bible" had been mentioned by a young married woman and the social world was aghast. She must be a horrid young woman with an evil mind.

Lady Waterford, one of the few women who

chivalrously came out on Lady Henry's side, writes to Lord Somers that people are saying of Mr. Justice Field's Judgment, "it must be a very remarkable Judgment if both sides are satisfied."

Lady Waterford was telling the truth in every ear that would listen to it and writes eagerly to Lady Somers that Lady —— had spoken to her "in the warmest frankest kindest way of Isabel and the deepest sympathy with her and angry with the cruel partizanship that has tried to crush so tried and innocent and wronged a creature."

But in spite of all that her father and mother and their friends could do or say privately, Lady Henry was cut by a large section of society. Some cut her because they knew only one side of the scandal, others cut her because there had been any scandal at all. She was never again invited to Mr. Gladstone's house. The Duchess of Bedford, her sister's mother-in-law, declined to meet her. Girls she had known were withdrawn from contact with her by their careful Mamas, and when they asked for an explanation they were told by these ignorant innocent women that "Isabel Somerset had invented a dreadful new sin."

A man she had known, whose wife was her friend, said to her, "Of course I understand that you are in the right but you must not mind my

wife not knowing you because I could not explain to her."

Does a talent for humanity involve being numbered with the transgressors? It was this experience that initiated her into the company of scapegoats and outcasts. Later she used to say, "You see I know exactly what it feels like to be in their shoes."

A letter from Lady Waterford from Highcliff to Lady Somers, who with Lord Somers was staying at Mont D'Or, Les Bains, written in August of the same year, gives a contemporary's view of Lady Henry's attitude at this time

August

16

1878 *Friday*

MY DEAREST VIRGINIA,

I must write you one line to say how — happy I have been that dear Isabel is here. and I only wish I was going to carry her off to Ford. She surprises me by her quiet dear ways no bitterness or anger, but simple patience and goodness. Poor little thing how I feel for her! and she is so agreeable and pleasant while this burden is on her and the first sad parting with her boy. C. Stuart had to come here for 2 days and is quite captivated by her and her agreeability . . . and yesterday who should come unexpectedly for luncheon but

a party from Cowes Lord and Lady Colville a girl and boy of their's and Sir D. and L^y Probyn. I was glad he found Isabel here. I scarcely had a word with him but he did speak of her that one word of profound pity and said "Why cannot she be divorced from such a man?" I hope I can be of use if ever she wants a friend to stay with when you are away and when the next month comes of the absence pray let me be of use.

Isabel looks so pretty and young. I look at her with wonder to think of such a weight on her young life . . .

I hope Mont D'Or is doing good. What a place it looks in the picture of it I have here —
an abode of fleas

My best love to Somers

Your affec
L. WATERFORD

CHAPTER V

DESOLATION

THE WORLD of society to which she had looked forward so eagerly from her schoolroom, and found so entrancing when she was free to enjoy it, had turned its back on her. For her part she would have been only too glad, like a child who had offended its elders, to let bygones be bygones. But there were to be no bygones in her case.

One night as she was coming out from the Opera, in the vestibule where people were waiting for their carriages, a high-born lady ostentatiously stood back and drew her skirts aside from Lady Henry's contaminating touch. The high-born one had not the satisfaction of seeing the slightest change of expression on the dignified little lady's face. But her victim went home and cried her eyes out and was not seen at the Opera again for years. Again, she and her sister¹ were sitting together one afternoon, in the latter's London drawing-room, when a footman came up

¹ Lady Adeline had married the Marquis of Tavistock in 1876.

to inform Lady Tavistock that her Grace the Duchess of Bedford was at the door. Lady Henry was hurried out down the back stairs. This was a wound that hurt her for a long time, and it was not until she had made the acquaintance of other women who were somebody's undesirable relations that the memory of it lost its sting and she was glad she knew "exactly what it felt like to be in their shoes."

Her attitude towards the society that would not receive her was the rare one of perfect simplicity. Her pride put up no defence. She never pretended even to herself that it was she who had lost her taste for the world. All through her life on the rare occasions on which she dipped into it she found it entrancing still.

Now she withdrew from London and at Reigate Priory made a little world of her own. From the plebeian point of view these friends were as high-born as the other great, but the initiated knew that they were not the cream of the society in which she had been moving before her separation from her husband. They may have been more intelligent and in some ways they were less conventional, for they came under the accusation of being "fast." The only evidence of "fastness" that can be traced is that one lady smoked and

occasionally drank a brandy and soda. They did, however, read and discuss such writers as Strauss and Renan.

With what in her diaries Lady Henry calls her "fatal susceptibility" she was always able to forget herself and everything else in the pleasure or interest of the hour. She enjoyed herself with a zest that made her a delightful companion. But she was frightened by her capacity for friendship, laughter and happiness. When her guests were gone the realization of her loneliness swept over her in desolating storms. The desire of her heart was still the one she had confided to the house party at Strawberry Hill; indeed her insatiable capacity for affection could only have been satisfied by mothering a large family of sons and daughters. She could find no relief in any occupation that might have filled her life. There was at that time very little that a woman could do outside her own home. She tried to interest herself in the management of her father's estate at Reigate. There are among the family letters, long letters from her to her father on the subject of sand and gravel pits; but she was baffled by her ignorance and the difficulty of gaining knowledge.

Lord Somers himself appears to have known very little about the business management of an

estate. In his day it was considered the right thing for a gentleman to have a gentlemanly confidence in his agent. The one instance of his interference with his agent's plans that tradition has handed down, was on his Herefordshire estate. Riding one day past an outlying farm he was struck by the want of symmetry in the new barn and stables that his agent had just put up. The offending buildings had to come down and be replaced by others that satisfied Lord Somers's artistic eye, though the cost of them may well have reduced his income.

No wonder Lady Henry was baffled in her attempts to understand the inner workings of the management of an estate, and to prepare herself for her future position of a great landowner. That future position seemed a long way off at this time. Her father was only fifty-nine and came of a long-lived family. She saw herself, at the age of twenty-seven, stranded in a backwater with empty years of loneliness before her, perhaps only to be ended by her own death.

About this time a young cousin came to the Priory on a three days' visit that lengthened into a stay of seven years. This cousin, whose name was Laura Gurney, first saw Lady Henry with the observant eyes of a girl of thirteen.

The impression made on me, she writes, stands out still as clear and luminous as a lighted picture in a dark room. Her personality was one to seize upon the imagination and its salient characteristic could be summed up in the one word "charm." She simply radiated charm; it seemed to shine from her like an atmosphere . . . Another characteristic . . . was her human sympathy . . . It was not sympathy as English people understand the word, just a benevolent attitude towards people in trouble and a general wish to help them. Isabel's sympathy was a great deal more than this. She projected herself, so to speak into the whole question of the trouble, whatever it might be, and showed a vivid burning interest betrayed in countless quick questions, after which she would think it over in silence for a moment, then there would be definite action of some sort. If the people were hungry, they must be fed, not in the future, but at once, from her own kitchen, if there was no other way. If they were cold, warm clothing must be despatched; and if it happened to be a Saturday and the shops were shut, blankets must be taken off the beds at Reigate then and there and despatched by her maid . . .

She was not really beautiful, yet she conveyed beauty more than most people. She was short and plump, but gave the impression of dignity and even of height and grace by her way of moving and the turn of her neck. She was still young

at that time and her hair was dark and thick. Her complexion was pale and it made a good background for those wonderful eyes of hers. The play of feature was very remarkable and reflected every mood, and even every thought with a lift of the eyebrows, the mobile lips and the little significant movements of the head. It was true of Isabel to say that when talking to her, people hardly looked beyond her face . . .

She was not in the least pedantic, but had definite ideas of her own about what should or should not be said and the mode of expression. I remember her correcting me once when I told her I had seen a gentleman in pink, "Don't say that," she said quickly, "Say, a man in red hunting coat." She did not approve of slang or of people sprawling about, and complained of my deportment, using the French word "tenue" to express herself, and explaining that, while it was right to be perfectly natural, one could not behave at a function as one did at home.

Perhaps it would be interesting to define her attitude towards what is termed rank and position. For herself, she accepted the station in which she had been born with the utmost simplicity, but the whole trend of her mind, even at that time, was truly democratic, and there was no stiffness or barrier of any kind with those in other classes, and in the days when servants were rigorously kept in their place she treated them with the utmost consideration and kindness.

Our life at Reigate was full of all sorts of interests, some frivolous and some serious. She took a great interest in our clothes, and a lesser one in her own, a subject which the French blood in our family has always made us believe a matter of some importance, and a Madame Rouff from Paris used to appear at regular intervals at Reigate during her visits to London, bringing with her quantities of mysterious patterns, and would hold converse with Isabel in voluble French hardly better than her own, Blanche [another cousin, Blanche Clogstoun, who was staying at the Priory] and I used to attend these conferences which led to mysterious boxes filled with lovely dresses arriving some weeks later . . .

Certain festivities stand out in my mind. A ball she gave at Reigate when I was sixteen, and which I attended and danced seven times with the same man to Isabel's unfeigned horror, for such a proceeding was entirely against the etiquette of that day, but the beauty of the lighted rooms, and the men in uniform and the women in fancy dress struck me so forcibly that I remember it now, though I have, unfortunately, forgotten what Isabel wore, having only a faint recollection of her in powder and patches.

Lady Henry's friends of these days seem to have known nothing of the struggle that was going on in her mind behind this outward life of

gaiety. This was characteristic of her. She was always reticent about her inner life. Just as she liked to go to church alone, to lock herself in her room that she might have complete privacy to say her prayers, so she preferred to face these struggles in silence. But she noted them down in her diary, when at night she went over the happenings of the day. Had she been wise in a decision that had maimed her life? Could she face the long years of loneliness that lay before her? If even the Church of Rome would annul such a marriage was she bound by the slacker rule of the English Church? These were the thoughts that beset her.

The Saints who wrestled with doubts and desolations must have been helped in the struggle by their conviction that the Cause of their mental anguish was outside them and was the Personal Enemy of their God. When right or wrong is a matter of opinion, when your Church gives no definite lead and claims no definite loyalty, then doubt and desolation are no longer stout devils that can be defied with satisfaction. They are nothing more than mists of bewilderment when you are sickened by the thought that you may be fighting not the folly but the wisdom of your own mind. The simplicity of her ambition to

be good had been clouded by the strange fate that had struck her down. She seemed to be tied by these doubts and misgivings. While all the world is discussing "iron laws" and "nature red in tooth and claw" how difficult, when there is a claw in your own flesh, to believe in a God of Love somewhere in the darkness. Yet she never wavered in her love and admiration for the character of Jesus Christ.

Then in 1883 Lord Somers died. His death made a great impression on her mind. The responsibility for the happiness and well-being of the tenants on his estates was now on her shoulders. Another death, that of a beautiful young woman, one of her intimate friends, who, driven mad by drink, had killed herself, deepened her sense of responsibility for the use she made of her life.

Faced by death and tragedy her unfailing belief in life and happiness asserted itself. "Not to be morbid—above all not to be morbid," she writes in her diary.

In the same practical way that she would have considered the needs of a beggar at her door she sat down to consider her own need. Her mind supplied her with an immediate course of action. "Act as if a God of Love were there in the darkness."

She was as well content with this advice as a starving beggar would have been with food and clothing. But it meant for her a great renunciation. She had met the man she would have married if she had been free, and she knew her own temperament too well to have any doubt that if she would rule her life by spiritual values she must go away now and bear her trouble alone.

She left Reigate Priory and went down to Eastnor Castle where for the next seven years she lived almost entirely alone.

Her diary for 1886 begins:

Resolution for the New Year — to trust God's Will and follow where He leads; to do my daily duty only being hourly led by Him to be tender and gentle and forgiving. God help me.

Her daily duty, in her reading of God's Will, was to attend to the needs of her tenants, especially to the housing of the labourers on the farms, whose picturesque cottages were not fit to live in. In a few years' time she had, according to an indignant gentleman in the neighborhood, "disfigured the country with new cottages."

The business of forgiving appears to have been the most difficult duty, for again and again in

her diaries such an entry as this is found: — “Oh, the bitterness of life. God help me. Made strong resolution to forgive.”

So far these duties were along the lines of her own nature, but when she tried to discipline herself by puritan rules she found she was working against the grain. She never succeeded in learning “to scorn delights,” but she did learn “to live laborious days,” and this habit of work she never lost.

She was trying to model herself on the pattern of the only people she knew whose lives were a witness to the sincerity of their faith. Full of self-distrust, she wanted to learn how to be a Christian. The Church in Herefordshire had not the salt of reality that her heart demanded. There was however, in Ledbury, a little band of Methodists whose faith in God was expressed by deeds of love and charity to all men. One of them was a certain Mrs. Ridley, an old cottage woman whose days were spent in feeding the hungry and visiting the sick. Through the hideous brutality and coarseness of the Bye Street, this old woman came and went all day long and half the night, protected by the sincerity of her concern for the souls of the drunkards and harlots.

Mrs. Ridley took the great lady of the county

under her wing. The honours and glories of this world were a matter of complete indifference to the simple old woman. "Her's come right through to blessedness," she said, recognising in Lady Henry a sincerity like her own. When she remembered to do it, she called her "my lady," but oftener she called her "my wench."

There were other Christian workers among the little band who could not accept the great lady so simply. The Miss B —— of the diaries and her kind, bewildered and depressed their humble-minded associate; to fit into their mould of "complete sanctification" she found she would have to cut off practically her whole nature. It was some time before she learnt that this was impossible.

Her diaries give a faithful record of how her time is spent—the estate affairs, her cottage visiting, the occasional arrival of London friends, and her distress because she enjoys their society so much.

Two important events are not mentioned. One of these was her realization that she must not ask any one to give up a pleasure that she was not willing to give up herself. This disagreeable truth had come home to her at a Temperance Meeting in Ledbury. She did not, however, sign the pledge that evening. She said she

wished to sign it among her own people at Eastnor. There was another reason for the delay, unacknowledged even to herself, that she admitted later. The meeting at Eastnor when she and her household were to take the pledge was arranged for the 1st of December. Before that day she went to London, and coming home in time for the meeting, she remembered the second reason for the delay she had allowed herself. She had wished to take a last drink. When she changed trains at Worcester she hurried to the Refreshment Room, ordered and drank her last glass of port.

The other event was the moment when John Stuart Mill's influence, stored in her mind since her schoolroom days, came to the surface and was acknowledged. She was being initiated into the Order of Rechabites — the Hereford and Radnor Division — and must make a speech. Her quotation from John Stuart Mill fitted the occasion:

Fear not the reproach of Quixotism or of fanaticism; but after you have well weighed what you undertake and are convinced that you are right, go forward, even though you do it at the risk of being torn to pieces by the very men through whose changed hearts your purpose will one day be accomplished.

The following are extracts from the diaries.

EASTNOR CASTLE

June 11 1887

Just two years passed . . . Oh God Thou knowest what the agony has been, the fiery trial . . . How much of all the surroundings of my life are gone, all the home circle gone, all the lives bound up in mine lost for ever for the second time. Here now 2 years after I live alone in unbroken monotony . . .

The poor are indeed my great happiness not the occupation of visiting them but the wonderful studies of such beautiful lives all round me give me such fresh courage, and then the marvellous simplicity and true tone that is found in their midst — realities are realities to them — not the constant straining after the effect of some sentiment wh. is no reality the bane of the so called upper classes.

The other day coming back from the Mission room with Adeline a lovely summer night — standing in the gateway in the twilight were the 2 little Trenfield children crying bitterly. Louisa Williams who was there said their mother had died not one hour before leaving 10 children — poor little motherless things I wonder if they could ever believe the comfort they brought to my heart when they each stole a little hand into mine and we walked off through the plantation they taking it at once for granted that I

would go at once to comfort Father — such confidence is so wonderfully precious to one — just a touch perhaps of the divine in every heart when it turns with the faith of a child to its Heavenly Father . . .

The poor man came out to meet me “Yes,” he said simply “it is very sad. I am put about, but the Lord knows best” — 10 children the eldest 19 a heavy burden of anxiety — “We never had a word she were always a good wife to me. I never thought I could be so put about” and he could bear it no longer and leaning his head against the cottage door he sobbed like a child.

June 13

A most glorious day. I wrote and wrote till I was heartily sick of business and letters all the morning — lunch — and then wrote letters till five, sat out for a moment in the stillness of the terrace. Oh what a lovely world — and then set out to see Pugh who is dying. it seemed so difficult to think of death along that walk all coming to life — all round white May blossoms at every turn and carpets of flowers under foot and above all the clear blue sky . . . Such a lesson of patience from old Mrs. Pugh, patiently and uncomplainingly she has sat up every night for a fortnight. There was such marvellous tender patience in the way she kept stroking his poor old toilworn hand and turning to me she said with tears in her gentle old eyes — “Dr. Wood says he be going

fast — I should like to keep him with me but His will be done — Pray with him my lady, maybe he will hear more nor we think for.”

June 16

N — told me all that Lord — had said of me. Such things are always hard to bear and I felt that the little that is true is the hardest.

June 18

The Alexanders came . . . I sat talking with the Alexanders on the terrace. I have spent a most miserable day. Oh Lord keep me with greater power. The attraction of society gets a firm hold over me. Just the old longing to please and attract and be amused and amusing, the old light tone about things. Christ set aside my life seems to float back so easily into the past . . . I will pray earnestly tonight. We think a past buried and a face will bring it back with intense longing. Alas human nature what a vile thing it is . . . I feel so sad tonight — a useless day spent — not one hour for Him — Old Pugh died today.

June 25

Wrote letters all morning my time is so terribly taken up. I made a resolution to get up at least $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour earlier and to read and pray then as afterwards too apt to let the time get involved and slip away.

Lord have mercy on my negligences and ignorances in thy pitiful goodness.

. . . Mrs. Holman came — how fatally I am influenced, one rather amusing story directly contrary to all I care for turns my heart at once.

June 26

Why do I so seldom talk without regretting every word I have said — it is because I lose communion with God — and so contact and touch with Him. There are some minds that wither the spiritual and exalt the earthy into a false light w^h does not belong to it and I always fall into this when I am with them.

July 4

Lovely day got up early and went under the trees to read the Bible — a most heavenly morning.

Wrote letters till lunch.

Afterwards went in my cart to Warne's Well to see Wanklin. I took him some tracts and a magnifying glass. He was much pleased with them. I sat talking about many things and Mrs. Wanklin was so long about a story of a sheep that had strayed it was very difficult to get to the end when it was finally hung on Barber's Walk. "Ah it were a pity," she said, "My boy he bought it and he thought it would be good for he and good for we but it were but a sorrow to we and the lamb not weaned — be but a poor creature it were a great trial." After a bit I got old Wanklin to

talk a bit, I tried once more to point him to the cross "Ah but" he said "there is summat in St. James about we were to do" — I was not very sure what he meant, I must look . . . As I went home I stopped at the hill side at Morgans and the prettiest girl I ever saw came to the door, a perfectly oval face and dark blue eyes, a dazzling skin and brown smooth hair, she had a short brown linsey dress and looked like a country girl in a picture. She told me she had come back from service because she was so ill — I sat talking to her a long time. She gave me some tea. She seemed very anxious about her health poor little thing . . .

The Pullings and curate and his family and Mr. Buck to dinner. I am afraid I was too much pleased with my appearance in my white tea gown and red roses — what a hateful curse vanity is — it is always besetting me although God knows there is so little to be vain about and after they were gone I thought how foolish I was and I might be 80 for all it mattered. I do thank God He has taken me from much temptation. Rain in torrents tonight and much cooler.

July 5

. . . Went to Ledbury Committee Meeting, the Revs. Brown and Evans are most trying. After that weary in body and mind the Lord sent me great comfort. I went to see Mrs. Ridley, dear old soul, there is one of God's Saints living

in her little cottage with nothing but her two chairs and her tracts and her soup cans and baskets just continually waiting on the Lord. She told me much of the poor of Ledbury and all I wanted to know and she was so marvellously interesting and graphic in her talk.

July 7

The T——'s came. He has something wonderfully simple and charming about him. She is of a different stamp of a critical turn of mind, much wanting in softness and a certain element of refinement, also it seems a much greater snare to the Parson's wife to become shoppy than the parson, but all professional talk merely as such is most wearisome and parish talk more than all. Is it the clergy's mission to save souls, is it work for eternity, if so let that work be spoken of with reverence and almost bated breath — if not it is inexcusable for a woman to harp upon it any more than for a doctor's wife to discuss his patients.

July 11

A day of trouble of mind, sadness and weariness sometimes seems to come over everything, it seems as if a tempest rose suddenly and swept all the dried and dead leaves of the past that had been lying quietly concealed into a great heap before me . . . There are times when the loneliness of life does come home to one so much. God forgive me if I am wrong to feel it.

July 15

. . . A stormy day with heavy thunder. Wrote letters all day till four o'clock then went out in my cart to Ledbury and round all the back yards with Mrs. Ridley. Oh what a wretched feeling comes over one's heart as one sees these places and realizes what one has. Such misery and want and squalor and wretchedness.

July 18

. . . Went to Ledbury prayer meeting at 12.30 and to old Mrs. Ridley afterwards . . .

[We] talked a long while and I always feel with her that the Lord is very near her and her quiet simple life of self-sacrifice is a living witness. "Look you here," she said as she took me into the kitchen, "there be my wood always standing and my water ready for the fire so I comes in starved of a winter's night and no fires and all the house cold and dark then I lights it up and biles the kettle and if there's any poor folks I gives them a cup o' tea too, and so its soon done and I haven't time to fidget about my house."

What a life lived for Christ among the poor.

July 18

. . . went off to the tent. I felt nervous . . . Williams spoke and then he asked me to speak and I did for about 10 minutes . . . after the meeting an old man who might be a minister came up to me and said "I come from America and I

would like to shake hands with you." I held out my hand and said "I see we are in sympathy." He said a few more words he told me his name was Hart, relation of the Harts here — that he was going back to America.

. . . He turned away to leave the tent but as he was going he stopped and came back and said, "I want to tell you something, 37 years ago I lived at the White House in Eastnor — I had lived there for 17 years and when the agent was being changed the clergyman had the charge of the Estate for a time and at that time I had joined the Wesleyans and I had helped to build the Chapel in Ledbury and on that account notice was served me through the curate and I had to leave and so left the country. I don't know if Lord Somers ever knew of it and now I come back after 35 years of absence and find you doing this work."

July 19

Wrote letters all the morning. Dr. S— came in his caravan, it must be a charming way of travelling, a yacht on wheels. Wrote again till four, then rested and prepared to go to Ledbury. A most trying day. I went from house to house with Mrs. Ridley dear old soul she was beaming with happiness — saw some very sad cases of illness — one impressed me very much — a poor weary little dressmaker had taken in an old and entirely deaf neighbour, and had done everything

for her, giving her shelter, fond and loving care, while she herself earned it all with her own toil —
What Charity —

Sunday 24 July

Church — old Mr. Belcher preached — part of the sermon gave me pain, part was good. I cannot understand how it is the simple truths of the Gospel seem such a dead letter. Lunch and a talk with Mrs. Ellis, letters and then Sunday School at Holly Bush. . . I had not meant to stay for the Meeting but I did . . . old Sims drove me home and I was so much touched he said “My lady you are my first thought waking and my last thought at night and never a morning passes that I don’t pray for you after I have prayed for my wife.” Is it not such prayers that have been answered in the Lord’s wonderful way in bringing us to the light —

August 2

A most cloudless day, wrote letters and talked to Tredcroft on the terrace . . .

Then I went to meet Lady Rossmore who came full of smiles and looking more handsome than ever — We went for a walk — dinner etc — After dinner long talk about London people and their different affairs — empty and wretched, went upstairs and prayed it not continue. God’s love is so great — I came down downstairs and in the most marvellous way the conversation turned to

His marvellous love and heaven and our hope in Him.

Then the Castle is full of guests, "a wave of the old life" seems to come back, and she longs to accept an invitation to Clumber. In the end she does accept it.

August 29

Went to Leigh. I can't write much I am so tired — when I got back I found a letter from Miss B—— which went *straight* to my heart. She told me she knew I required fuller consecration *deeper consecration* that I should never do this work unless *Jesus only* was my sole motto. She is so right. Oh I will plead with Him that it may be so. Just *all Lord all*. I have given up Clumber.

Aug. 30

A day of ceaseless work. I am worn to death so many calls so much anxiety seem Lord to weigh on my spirit like lead . . . in the afternoon I went to see Miss B—— She spoke to me very freely and I did thank her for it. She was quite right when she told me the message God had given her and she told me the message for me was that I was to go into great temptation and the Devil was preparing a snare to drag me back — it made me wretched although I did look up and pray and pray. We went to the Meeting, she

spoke. I had no message to give, my throat seemed parched and dry . . . When I left Miss B—— gave me a letter she asked me to read on my knees — I did so — the purport of it was she had a message to say God wanted her to come to me — I did not know what to feel — I prayed about it but no light came. I could not hear God's voice in the matter.

Aug. 31

Worked hard Estate accts all day — letters business — sad scene with C — who was drunk. Very unhappy at all his and her trouble, then more work . . .

Then I went out for a short time the flowers looked radiantly lovely I am so loath to part from them, the summer is really over *alas alas* my heart aches for the sunshine . . . another long letter from Miss B.

Sep. 1st

A trying day . . . in the evening went to Ledbury to see site of Gospel Hall behind the Coffee tavern and then to Miss B—— where I had a most painful interview . . . she probed down into the very depths of my heart and told me my boy was my idol and he would be taken from me — that she foresaw months of agony before me. Oh Lord give me strength for all things — I don't understand her she is so true and good and devoted but does she not look in when she should

be looking out, it frightens me I don't understand it. I am terrified at her.

BRAEMAR *Sept. 7*

Arrived here after a long journey. Mama delighted to see me. I sat and talked all the evening. I, as usual, drifting into idle gossip only to be amusing.

11th . . . 15

These last days have been a series of dining here and there, driving, walking and eternal talking . . . I certainly am God knows the most wretchedly weak useless creature in the world . . . I just slip happily and contentedly into a hot-bed of gossip and idle silly talk . . . I know Mama thinks me lighthearted and frivolous—I have laughed and talked, never once spoken out for Christ. I am a wretched coward, a miserable follower afar off.

The diary is continued for another year, and on September 26, 1888, there is this entry:

I went to a Salvation Army Meeting at the Rink. (Sheringham) a holiness Meeting. God was very present very near and I felt how much I had kept back—so when they were invited to the penitent form I tried to keep back but I could not and I gave in and knelt there . . . I told the people I had kept back part of the price and it is true . . .

so many things kept back, *money* . . . now especially I will pray for trust about *money* and *I will* make every effort now only to spend for Him.

It is not the first time this significant word has been mentioned. The family letters after her marriage and indeed farther back, the reminiscences of a housekeeper at Eastnor Castle who knew Lady Isabel as a child, show that she had inherited the Pattle family's tendency to slice up their Ceylons.

"When the little Lady Isabel and the little Lady Adeline went driving into Ledbury from Eastnor Castle," writes Mrs. Walmsley, the housekeeper, "it was the custom to give them both money to spend in town. The Lady Isabel invariably distributed hers along the road to beggars and others, leaving herself very little to shop with if any. The Lady Adeline spent frugally and generally brought a considerable lot back with her."

Resolutions to be careful in spending money occur again and again, but, all through their lives it was Lady Adeline's part to spend her money generously, rescuing her sister from financial bogs.

These extracts from an intimate diary show the simplicity and earnestness of her desire to do right.

Only those who know her will realize what a discipline those years of working against the grain of her nature must have been. She was despised by the outside world as fanatical, and snubbed by her less intelligent fellow workers, but her humility never meant the lowering of her great personal dignity. The only blight of this narrow puritanism seems to have been a temporary distrust of her sense of humour.

There are two letters, one from her sister Lady Tavistock and one from her cousin Rachel Gurney, that show what those who knew her best thought of her at this time.

Letter from Lady Tavistock to Lady Henry:

Friday 37, CHESHAM PLACE S.W.

My darling I want to break the ice about one thing we are both of us thinking about more than anything else in the world. I mean this great new blessing of joy and peace in God that is breaking upon you more and more and wh. I am beginning to have glimpses of like some far off light in Heaven — I am so thankful for you darling and for all the work you are doing — I am only just beginning to see things like a child and to get off the track of reasoning about them but I mean to sit at His feet till I do hear His word and then go and do it I hope —

Mrs. Booth's books are the greatest help to me.

I send you Popular Christianity (the last) by book post tomorrow — I have done with it — it does not touch me so much as the others . . .

I can't write any more tonight darling but I felt I must open my heart to you.

Your own devoted

NAT

Letter from Rachel Gurney (afterwards the Countess of Dudley) to Lady Henry:

Saturday 27, CHESHAM PLACE S.W.

MY OWN DARLING

Your beloved letter was like a breath from a purer atmosphere this morning — Oh darling I can't tell you how I burn with sympathy for you in all the splendid work you are doing — I think I must tell you how much I have had to be grateful for to you. It is the strangest thing in the world how the thought of you has helped me and the remembrance of you and the beauty and unselfishness of your life has been a charm that has helped me in many temptations. I don't think I should ever be able to tell you this so I write it — It is funny you should have thought of us when you came out of your Meetings for I don't think I have ever set out for a ball without picturing you walking up that grimy street on your way home after a Meeting — and I have always prayed that I should be able to look you in the face and say I had come through this season as you would

have wished me to. Forgive this untidy scrawl which is strangely unlike your hard headed commonsense Hing

With deepest love and sympathy and devotion
Yours HING

The grimy street was the Bye Street in Ledbury, where, to the scandal of the Church and the upper classes in the neighborhood, Lady Henry had established a Mission Hall, and provided converted clowns and other attractions to make temperance popular in the drunken town.

Ledbury is three miles from Eastnor Castle and it was part of her offence that the drunkards she wished to reform were not even her own tenants. In revenge a young curate of the neighbourhood, who would hardly have dared to show his face in the Bye Street, thought it sporting to come and rebuke her impudence to her face from the pulpit of Eastnor Church.

There were other Mission Halls, one at the Holly Bush on her own property, and a Mission tent at Castle Morton. Soon she was working as far afield as South Wales.

Then another cause of offence cropped up. It had been known already in Ledbury that she found excuses for notorious sinners by condemning the conditions under which they lived.

“Unspeakable drudgery” had been responsible for the rough life of the Bye Street girls. So now in Wales, not content with preaching temperance to the miners, she must enquire into the conditions under which they lived and worked.

A great lady in the neighborhood of Hereford who had known her from her childhood sent for her to ask her if she realized she was a traitor to her class.

CHAPTER VI

WORK

ABOUT this time while Lady Henry was busy with her Mission work in Ledbury and the neighbourhood, an American Quaker lady and her family had come over from Philadelphia and had settled in England.

This lady, Mrs. Pearsall Smith, had published some years before a book called "The Christian Secret of a Happy Life." The secret was an old one that had been and still is discovered over and over and over again by simple minds, and lost as often in a world that does not appear to be simple. Mrs. Smith's gift of lucid expression, however, made the secret her original find, and her book was a great success both in America and in England.

When she arrived in London she found she was already famous and disciples were waiting to sit at her feet. Now this American lady was beautiful and wealthy, she inhabited a healthy body and had a mind well rooted in her New England family's downrightness and simplicity.

Her English admirers were delighted to find that she was everything in appearance and position that the possessor of the secret of Christian happiness should be. For her part Mrs. Smith was overjoyed to discover that these charming people who were waiting to hear her belonged to the class she had from her childhood hungered to see and know. When she was a little girl she had read in her democratic home a story called "The Earl's Daughter" and had cherished ever since a romantic admiration for the English aristocracy.

Her teaching, so effectively backed by her physical and social well-being, amounted to this, — that peace of mind and happiness can be secured if all responsibilities are laid on the Lord.

She thought she allowed no exceptions to this abiding in peace. When a troubled lady confessed that the condition of the London slums was a hindrance to her faith Mrs. Smith declared that she did not worry about slums, they were "Heavenly Father's housekeeping." But for some reason she could not leave Heavenly Father to manage the Temperance question. Already in America she had interfered enthusiastically in this matter, and one of the first things she did on her arrival in England was to join the British Women's Temperance Association. This

“large and old-fashioned association”, as some of its members fondly call it—though there was nothing old-fashioned about it, unless it was the bonnets of some of its members—was one of the youngest of the temperance associations in England, and owed its inspiration not to England but to America.

It had been founded by a Lancashire Quaker lady, Margaret Parker, who had gone to America in 1875 as a delegate to a meeting of the Grand Lodge of Good Templars. On her return Mrs. Parker had published an account of her travels called “Six Happy Weeks Among the Americans” and had then set to work to found a British Woman’s Association on the model of the more up to date American Women’s organisation for temperance work.

A great many intelligent good women joined the Association; a large proportion of them members of the Society of Friends. To these were added others who thought they were good, and were not intelligent. These women did not care to dwell on the link that bound their British Associations to America.

Mrs. Smith was welcomed into the B. W. T. A. by her Quaker friends and soon became one of its most conspicuous members. Once a month

she wrote a circular letter to her relations and friends in America, giving them an account of her life and doings in England. Some extracts from these letters will show the part she was to play in Lady Henry's life.

5.18.'87

40 GROSVENOR ROAD,
WESTMINSTER EMBANKMENT,
S.W.

. . . London is very interesting just now. Every day there are about fifty things one would like to do. I am going this afternoon to meet a lot of "noble ladies" at Lady Mount Temple's to talk with them about the Mind Cure.

5.25.1887

. . . On the 15th I went to Westminster meeting in the morning, and in the afternoon went as usual to Lady Mount Temple's, where one always meets interesting people on Sunday afternoons. This time there was a most remarkable lady, who seems to have come by direct revelation, without books or teachers, into the knowledge of all the truths, (or errors, as some would say) of Faith Healing, the Mind Cure, the life of full salvation, early Quakerism, the mystical interior life, etc. etc. . . . It was most interesting to see the workings of a soul which seemed to have been so directly taught by the Spirit. There was one thing however that frightened me about her, and

that was that she seemed to think she had arrived at a state of *sinless perfection*, and I know that is a very dangerous place to be in. She quite took the upper hand of *me*.

July 3 1887

. . . the great Jubilee took place, and it was truly a wonderful affair. The whole nation seemed to go wild over it, and I am strongly impressed with the devotion of the English people of all grades and ranks to the ranks above them. I believe the technical name for this devotion is "snobbism," and I have come to the conclusion that it is in the very atmosphere here, so that an Englishman, even the most radical, can no more help it than he can help breathing. The crowds of people that stand craning their necks for hours just to catch a glimpse of the top of some Royalty's bonnet or hat are both ridiculous and pitiful to see. I myself believe that England is given over to snobbism and that no Radical Party will have the slightest chance of success for many years to come, if ever again. The Tories, who are the Aristocrats, have an immense majority, both in Parliament and out, and are carrying everything with a high hand, and mean to go on doing it, so that I see no hope for Ireland, or for the poor man anywhere. What is the most amazing is that the lower classes themselves are all so largely Tory. A little notice from an Aristocrat reduces them to abject toryism at once.

She goes on to speak of a reception given by Sir Frederick Leighton at the Royal Academy.

. . . We found a crowded stream of elegantly dressed aristocracy ascending the stairs and being received by Sir Frederick Leighton, and then dispersing through the different galleries. It was an interesting thing to get a peep at the Aristocracy in low necks and short sleeves, and pinched waists, but this very soon palled.

40. GROSVENOR ROAD,

8.9.1887

LONDON S.W.

. . . There certainly is a charm about the English upper classes that is indescribable, and I confess I do enjoy them exceedingly. For one thing they are far more like Americans than the classes below them. I am quite convinced that we Americans are in a further state of evolution than the English. What is rare with them is universal with us. And it delights me to see how they appreciate us. To be an American, seems to be a certain passport to their favour. They seem to look upon us all as belonging to the Aristocracy. And they sigh for our special developments of freedom, and large heartedness, and unconventionality, and spirit of progress. . . . I do my best, you may be sure, to intensify this feeling of envy of our lot; and I especially make the English mouth water by my praises of the Women's Christian Temperance Union women

and their work . . . I believe it would be very easy to make a "boom" for our women if they could be brought over here.

I have attended two meetings of Josephine Butler's on the subject of the infliction by England of the horrible C.D. Acts upon the women of the nations they conquer . . . My very soul blazed with indignation as I listened to the voiceless cry of my enslaved and outraged sisters of heathen lands! I wonder God does not sweep England out of existence at one blow! I cannot think that those old nations in the Land of Canaan, the Hittites, and the Amonites, and the Perrizites, who were doomed to destruction because of their sins, could have been worse than England! I tried to speak in one of these meetings, but broke down crying with an anguish of pity.

Then she attends one of the celebrated Evangelical Conferences held at Broadlands, the home of Lord and Lady Mount Temple.

. . . Most of the guests gathered on the 2nd of August. There were about forty entertained in the house, about twenty clergymen, and when you understand that each person had a room to themselves, and that some of the ladies had maids, who also had to be accommodated besides all the houseservants, and the family, you can get a little idea of the number of rooms the house con-

tains. Some one told me it was 100, and I can easily believe it.

George Macdonald and his wife were there . . . Canon Wilberforce, Lord Radstock, Mr. Clifford, Lady Darnley, etc. etc. I cannot give all the names . . . Our days were divided as follows. Breakfast at nine. Family Prayers at ten, followed by $\frac{1}{2}$ hours talk on thoughts suggested by the leader of Prayers. Meeting under the Beeches at eleven. Lunch at one. Meeting under the Beeches or in the Orangery at 2. Afternoon tea at five. A reading in the dining room, generally by George Macdonald at six, while Lord Radstock and others held an Evangelistic meeting for the people of Romsey under the Beeches. Dinner at eight. Family prayers again at 9.30. Bed at ten. After we had separated for the night downstairs, each with our candle presented to us by the solemn looking butler, there always began a visitation in wrappers from room to room, when confidences were exchanged, and troubles poured out, and perplexities aired, so that it was generally pretty late before one really got to bed.

In the summer of 1889 she meets Lady Henry's sister, Lady Tavistock.

. . . she is a most charming person and evidently very religious. She arranged with me for an interview of herself and Mrs. Benson, the wife of the Bishop Benson who lives in Lambeth Palace,

on the subject of my views on holiness and the life of faith. It is to come off this week.

. . . Lady Tavistock and Rachel Fowler and I are hoping to start some Ladies' Prayer meetings in London during the "Season," for the upper class ladies, who, Lady Tavistock says, are starving for some food outside of their Churches, where often they are fed with the merest chaff. Lady Tavistock is really the Marchioness of Tavistock, and her husband is the heir of the Duke of Bedford, so anything she starts is sure to go, and she seems especially fitted for just such a meeting, as she has had a great deal of success in her work among her own tenants at "Oakley House" in Bedford, and is a most devoted christian. It is very interesting to see so many really earnest christians among the very highest nobility, but I must confess it is mostly among the women.

She becomes acquainted with another type of great lady:

. . . They say Lady Carlisle is such a radical that she will not even use napkins but wipes her mouth on the table cloth.

So far among all these members of the English aristocracy she has not met one who in every particular came up to the expectations raised in her childhood by "The Earl's Daughter." But

the moment was to come when she would meet and recognise her ideal aristocrat, and find in a genuine Earl's daughter a great lady who never disappointed her.

Meanwhile Lady Henry's investigations into the conditions under which the girls of the Bye Street in Ledbury worked, and miners lived and worked in South Wales, had led her farther afield than she had expected to go. She had not the slightest compunction about being "a traitor to her class" because she was wondering if it were possible that *she* and her class might be traitors to their fellow-countrymen. Somehow it was wrong, if Christianity were right, that one class should possess all the good things of life while another lived in poverty on the border line of starvation.

She found herself, rather shyly, preparing to speak at a meeting in the East End of London on the same platform with John Burns. It was while she was waiting in her hotel to go to this meeting that Mrs. Pearsall Smith came to see her, and they met for the first time.

Mrs. Smith writes to her friends in America:

. . . I had a most interesting evening last week in Charrington's great Assembly Hall at the East

End. The Dockers' strike was so successful that all other trades are being stirred up to strike, and this was a meeting called to organise women's labour in the East End. Lady Henry Somerset took me on to the platform with her, as she was to be one of the speakers. An organization was formed, and I was horrified at the need for it that was made manifest in the speeches, many women, it was stated, working for sixteen or even nineteen hours a day, and getting only eight or ten shillings a week. John Burns, the leader of the Dockers' strike, spoke and was most convincing on the absolute necessity for the organization of labour.

In February 1890 Mrs. Smith writes her Circular Letter from Eastnor Castle, where she is paying her first visit to Lady Henry:

. . . it *is* a genuine Castle too, with towers, and turrets, and battlements, and all the paraphernalia of a real Castle out of a novel. It is an immense place, with a large Deer park, and about 18000 acres of land. The Castle itself seems like a village, it is so immense. The entrance Hall would hold our London house, and its walls are lined with old armour, and its floor is covered with skins, and looks wonderfully feudal. The Park has been a park ever since 1300, but the present Castle was built only about 100 years ago, near but not quite on the site of the old one . . .

. . . The depth and spirituality of her (Lady Henry's) christian character delighted me, and I think we formed a real friendship. To my joy the British Women's Temperance Association have asked her to be their President in the place of Mrs. Lucas, and I think she will accept . . .

I believe she will make a grand President. She has been very much interested in studying up our American work, and is prepared to co-operate with us heartily in the World's Union. If only she finally takes the position I shall feel greatly encouraged about the work here.

She writes again two months later:

April 5, 1890

. . . Another thing that has interested me very much is the nomination of Lady Henry Somerset to be President of the British Women's Temperance Association in place of Mrs. Lucas who has, as you all know, lately been called to her heavenly Home. I wrote to you about her (Lady H. S.) in my last letter. I have seen her a good deal since I was at Eastnor Castle, and the more I see of her the more charmed I am with her in every way. She is a deeply taught christian, and is also a very talented woman, with a most delightful charm of manner, and a great gift for organizing . . . added to all the rest she is very handsome and dresses with exquisite taste.

Lady Henry had at first refused to be nominated as President. She was afraid of popularity. "There is so much in the work that seems to speak to the flesh — is it of God that I should take it — I am willing to lay it down," she wrote in her diary. But "on the urgency on one of the Committee" she at last consented. This member was Mrs. Pearsall Smith, whose mind was perfectly clear as to the will of God in this matter: it coincided with her own. There were several members of the Committee who doubted from the first the wisdom of their choice. It was true they had wanted a "titled lady" for their President but they had grave fears that Lady Henry Somerset might prove to be more than "a titled figure-head."

Mrs. Smith, having provided the B. W. T. A. with the president of her choice, had now determined to take that president to America to study American methods and work, and was waiting for the Lord to agree with her and make the way plain.

She writes:

I even begin to hope under her (Lady Henry's) auspices, we may before very long have a World's W. C. T. U. Convention in London, to which I trust our grand American women will come in a flood!

Lady Henry never accepted Mrs Smith's cheerful doctrine of the rest in faith in Heavenly Father's housekeeping. One cold winter night between eleven and one o'clock she took Mrs. Smith out with her to see if it were true that hundreds of homeless people were sleeping on the bridges and the Embankment. They walked a long way and crossed Blackfriars Bridge but saw no homeless people sleeping in the streets. Two nights later Lady Henry insisted on going again. This time they went to the Salvation Army Shelters.

Mrs. Smith writes in her Circular Letter:

. . . It was one of the saddest and most discouraging sights we had either of us ever seen, not so much because of the poverty, as because of the plain and unmistakeable signs of degradation from drink. I never saw a more utterly beastly set of human beings, and it seems an insult to beasts to call them this. For a penny these sots, for they were nothing else, could get a decent place to sleep, in a comfortable airy room, and for another penny they could get enough to eat . . .

They were all evidently professional tramps, and they could "bum" around all day in their haunts of drink and vice, sure at night of a warm and comfortable shelter and good food, for the infinitesimal sum of 2d. If one enjoyed bumming

nothing could be more satisfactory. Nearly all the christian workers among the slums feel grave doubts of the wisdom of these Salvation Army shelters, as they find by experience that all such things only encourage thriftlessness and pauperize the recipients. No doubt some do get converted at the meetings and that of course is pure gain. But the night we were there it seemed hopeless to expect to reach such a sodden set of drunkards.

Here Mrs. Smith was speaking for herself alone. Lady Henry in the Salvation Army shelters was storing in her memory altogether different impressions. If these poor dears were thriftless she knew she was thriftless too — drunkards, — how natural to take whatever solace their intolerable conditions offered. Her fear was that there might be others like them who had absent-mindedly drunk their last tuppence and must sleep out in the cold because they could not afford the comparative luxury of the shelter. Very willingly she would have taken off her fashionable hat and put on the Salvation Army bonnet if she had been free to give her life to caring for these desolate creatures.

The next time she went to the Salvation Army shelters she went alone and spoke to the tramps.

In October 1891 Mrs. Pearsall Smith's plans having all worked out successfully, she sailed with Lady Henry for America.

Lady Henry writes home to her sister:

TEUTONIC

Monday, October 12th

I must write a line to you, darling, I have just written to Mamma because I fear we shall be in very late and I may miss the mail — you will have a cable from me before you get this I hope darling from which you will learn what a bad passage we have had from the hour we left Queens-town, we have had a fearful time. The storm was unceasing a head wind all way and the ship labouring and toiling rolling shaking and quivering as if she were struggling and fighting all in vain.

Kate [*her maid*] has been fearfully ill and poor old Mrs Smith was really so bad that I was frightened as she had not tasted food for three days until yesterday I forced her to drink iced champagne and she began to mend at once.

I have not been sick once but have felt wonderfully ill and faint until yesterday when I pulled myself together and struggled up and since then have really felt even hungry. We are now off the banks of Newfoundland, and my memory reverts to many a dreary sermon of Pulling's about "Newfoundland" and the yearly anecdotes about the miles the inhabitants walked to

church ending with the usual threatening as to what would happen to Eastnor people who did not turn up on Sundays, can't you hear it still! I have beguiled my only available hours by reading Miss Benson's book which I think very remarkably well written and with a curiously true knowledge of a certain side of life — country life however would not be so arid if there were a few more Mr. Rendalls —

The passengers on board are all Americans and you hear people going up to each other and asking "how they do and whether they have thrown up" and other questions that seem to point to their being intimate — when the conversation closes with — "My name is Pearson — Ah indeed Mrs. Pearson very glad to know you, my name is Whitaker from Philadelphia" — and you realize that they are total strangers.

The Captain tells me we may hope to get in Wednesday night but not to land till Thursday morning so that will make us 28 hours later than we should be.

YONKERS, NR NEW YORK

Oct. 15th

Darling we are here in a heavenly place which seems like Paradise after the utter misery of the last ten days. No words can say how awful Tuesday night was — the great ship seemed like a tea-cup tossed on the waves and heeled over so that it seemed almost impossible she should ever right

herself while the storm positively swept over her — I never could have believed any night could have been so dreadful — however beyond leaving me prostrate with Neuralgia it is alright, and I lay there quite unable to see hosts of interviewers, white ribbon women with flags and bouquets and a World in white flowers and a long Address on Vellum — but next morning I revived, landed after a long tussle with the Custom house, and drove through New York to see Mrs. Hickox (Nelle Butler's sister) who had come to see me. The streets of New York are a sort of patchwork, now and then like Paris, now and then like Manchester. A horrible rough pavement, tram cars, elevated railway, telephone wires, telegraph poles everywhere — a rush and hurry beyond all words, niggers everywhere, and jolting awful — cabs that bang over cobble stones and tram lines and run into every cart and then sit and quarrel with other drivers. Then we went to the station called "dee-po" so pronounced and came on here which is a sort of suburb where a "lovely home" is provided and really it is so.

A charming old woman of an old type with large rolls of white curls a very nice daughter and son and two very pretty nieces and a nephew and the old husband — all the family they are refined and simple, and the most comfortable house with a lovely garden (their gardener Scotchman knows Coleman¹ well) and the beautiful Hudson river

¹ Coleman was the head gardener at Eastnor Castle.

runs right under the windows such a stretch of splendid water with the rocks rising up opposite, blue mountains and lovely autumn foliage you would rave about it. The steamer seems a bad dream and I am so comfortable I can only feel thankful. I speak in New York Saturday evening. Monday I go to Chicago.

To her mother:

YONKERS, NEW YORK

October 19th 1891

MY DARLING,

This letter is intended as a general report so I send it first to Adeline that she may send it on to you as I am not certain where you will be when this reaches England. I leave here tomorrow for Washington where I stay three days as I have a meeting there tomorrow night and then return to New York, I shall be in the town itself as this is too far out to be able to see much that I want to see.

It has been a most delightful rest and I have quite recovered all effects of the voyage and am really rested.

They are delightfully simple people the old man is worth two million *not* dollars but pounds, yet his old wife goes down every day to help the servants to wash up. They have a most beautiful garden and an English gardener who knows Coleman and speaks of him with awe! The country

round here is beyond all words beautiful, the woods with red maple and the wild vines and masses of different coloured leaves growing down to the river are quite exquisite. The roads are very rough but long avenues of trees make them shady and cool. The villas however that are built all along the banks are too awful for words! all the very rich people live here and many of the great millionaires. I went to see some of their houses we should think them very ordinary.

On Saturday I had a meeting in New York when I spoke for the West London Mission — (Adeline will understand this).

Sunday we went to a very long dreary service at the Baptist chapel (these people are Baptists) where we had a missionary sermon and the minister appealed for a certain sum — there were very few people in the church the collection amounted to £2500 *not dollars*. In the evening I went to the coloured church — they have one all to themselves and a coloured minister, it was delightful.

Mrs. Pearsall Smith writes to her family in London:

. . . Thus far Lady Henry is charmed with America, except the streets and roads. These horrify her. They even shock me after the Eng-

lish ones. In New York we had to drive to her Banker in William St., and we were jolted so unmercifully that I do not believe Lady Henry will ever be willing to drive through the New York streets again. The roads out here are not much better. She is amazed we stand it, and I confess I am too. She thinks everything looks as if it were only just begun. I am trying to take good care of her.

Lady Henry writes to her mother and sister:

WASHINGTON

Oct 21, 1891

. . . I came here yesterday, and had my first great meeting here last night, about 3,000 people packed like herrings in a barrel and standing all down the aisles. I never saw such a crowd. It was a great exertion, but it went off all right and I will send you a paper which will amuse you, although the report of what I said is unrecognizable! but emanated entirely from the reporter's brain. After the meeting I had to shake hands with quite 300 people until my hand was nearly shaken off! but they were most enthusiastic.

This is a most delightful town. I cannot say what a charm it has with beautiful green avenues everywhere, and all the public buildings are really very fine. I am staying in a charming old-fashioned house like one described in "Queechy."

It is like an old country town house would have been in England untouched for fifty years, and only when the little coloured servant comes in with a great tray of fruit in her little white cap and apron, do you realize you are in America.

“You want to go to coloured revival? There’s splendid one goin’ on in 19th Street Church,” she has just been in to say.

You would love the coloured people, they are delightful. I went to the “coloured church” at Yonkers last Sunday evening, and they nodded their dear woolly heads, and shouted their hymns and were so nice.

I went to hear Amanda Smith speak this morning, I wonder whether you (Adeline) have ever heard her — She is perfectly marvellous in her exquisitely picturesque language and her real refinement. I believe if she came to London she would attract really educated people.

After that I went to the White House to be introduced to the President and his wife, and in my whole life I never saw such a funny scene. Wednesday is the day the President publicly receives, and every man, woman, and child has a right to go in and shake hands with him, so in the great reception room there sat people of all sorts, mechanics, coloured people, working men, shopkeepers — anybody, everybody, and in came the President and they all passed before him and he shook hands with each.

I had of course a private reception, and saw

Mrs. Harrison a common little woman who was however very civil.

The White House would be in England barely a fine country house, not so big as Sutton, and decorated!! beyond all words. Then I went to the Congress Hall and the Senate House, which are quite splendid, a great, white, domed building, standing on a hill overlooking the whole city, and really worthy of a great nation.

I went into the Supreme Courts where the Judges were sitting and it was all marvellously interesting.

I cannot say how much America impresses me in some ways. There seems such a future spread out, and such hope everywhere, so little misery and such a happy, bright, joyous outlook everywhere, although there is the reverse of the medal in the hopeless vulgarity which prevails, but it is the vulgarity of the unformed rather than the vulgarity of ignorance.

There is another drawback, I am devoured by mosquitoes! which make me look too horrible, as if I had some "fatal skin disease" as you would say darling mama — however I hope that will subside.

I am very well.

These people are quite charming, the very best specimens of intellectual American women.

Her father was Minister of State during all Lincoln's Administration, and a very distinguished man.

For Mama and Adeline

CHICAGO

Nov. 2, 1891

MY DARLINGS,

This is a detestable city black and horrible but full of the most interesting work. Moody's school for training men and women is perfectly delightful. I wish we had such a place in England. Moody is on his way to England so I missed him, he is going out to India.

I had an immense meeting in the great concert hall here last night. There were 4000 people there and quite 2000 turned away — the crush at the doors was perfectly dreadful. Miss Willard presided most charmingly and it was not at all a difficult hall to speak in. The newspapers are too funny — I have been interviewed from morning till night . . . they are a perfect nuisance.

We are going tonight to Cleveland to stay with Mrs. Hickox but I go to Washington on Thursday and then we all go to Boston next Monday for the Convention.

I cannot say how delightful Miss Willard is, she is quite unique so refined and winning and gentle.

I could never tell you how horrible the streets are here, it is a sort of unfinished Manchester on the shore of Lake Michigan which is like an ugly sea.

Evanston is delightful, but this! . . .

I went to see all the plans of the World's Fair

which are wonderful. The president of the whole thing was wonderfully civil to me and gave me a beautiful bouquet. They are all so kind and so vulgar.

I was invited to a reception of all the philanthropists of Chicago and 500 women were there — it is a weird entertainment — you stand and each one is presented by name, like a drawingroom and then passed on. I was dropping after shaking the fifth hundred hand.

The girls at these parties are all dressed in evening gowns and the blinds are drawn down and the lamps lighted and occasionally they break into song. The Greenaway style of dress is apparently most in vogue and it seems so strange to hear continually such names as Mrs. and Miss Judge Simpson, Mrs. Dr. Jones, Rev. Mrs. Smith — which means that their husbands are Judges, etc.

Mrs. Pearsall Smith tells her tale:

11-7-1891

. . . We had a grand time in Chicago and Lady Henry's meeting was splendid. Thousands could not get in, and the streets were blocked for squares. We saw a great many interesting things in Chicago, and were interviewed by reporters day and night.

Nov. 10, 1891

BOSTON

. . . It is almost impossible to get time to write in the *whirl* of a W. C. T. U. Convention. Lady Henry and I are great "lions" in addition to all else, and this involves a lot of social work in the way of calls etc. that is more fatiguing even than meetings and Committees. Of course it is all her title, not to say that we neither of us have no personal charms. But one's charms are greatly enhanced by the "Lady" that accompanies them!

. . . This last week has been a tornado! The Convention and the women have absorbed every second of our time. I have my hands full in guarding poor Lady Henry who is beset on every hand. *Everybody* wants to shake hands with her, and when she is tired I simply will not allow it. It is a battle to get out of every meeting. I have to pull both her and Frances out by main force.

It is a *wonderful* Convention! Lady Henry is tremendously impressed. She thinks the poor B. W.s will tear their hair when they find how Americanized she is. She has decided to stay over all winter!

I am looking longingly towards home and shall be delighted to get there. The women are lovely but there are a great many of them, and it is very tiring. Sixty pulpits were filled by our women on Sunday, I preached three times. Lady Henry's sermon was a great success. Everybody was en-

raptured. The crowds were something fearful. She sent me ahead . . . and came later herself, and she was nearly torn to pieces getting through the crowd. She has a perfect ovation everywhere. Of course she is so lovely that all hearts are captured.

Nov. 20th 1891

BOSTON, MASS.

. . . I do not believe any public character has ever come to America before who has aroused such enthusiastic love as she has. It is no sinecure to be her protector against her admirers. I have to guard her as a hen guards its chickens from the hawk, or she would be simply *crushed* with kisses, and handshakes, and birthday books, and every other form of admiration possible. I tell her she must put on a stern front when I am gone, and learn how to protect herself. But she is so gracious and kindly, just like our sweet Lady Mount Temple, that it is hard for her to turn a cold shoulder to anyone.

Lady Henry writes to her Mother:

PHILADELPHIA

Sunday, Nov. 23, 1891

. . . Boston is over, and I never had a more deeply interesting week. How I wished you could have been there. First we had the world's meeting in Faneuil Hall, the most historically

interesting one in America for there practically the independence was declared. It is like an old-fashioned English country town hall, so evidently built after the model of the old Lincolnshire idea. We had representatives of nearly every country — S. Africa, Australia, N. Zealand, Japan, Burmah, Italy, France, the Sandwich Islands, Fiji, China, etc., etc., and the account of the temperance work and the need for it was engrossing; also the anti-opium movements.

Miss Willard presided and spoke, and I had to open the meeting with the address of welcome. Then we went into convention, and that lasted one day, after which the National met in Tremont Temple, which is a building about the size of Exeter Hall. They were wonderful meetings, at 10 o'clock, not a seat to be had each day, and the people in their seats at 6 o'clock in the morning.

The floor of the hall entirely reserved for delegates from N., South, East and West, representing every phase of work possible—education, evangelistic, prison, railway missions, young women—purity, any and every aspect of everything that could be undertaken. Miss Willard presided over this immense gathering in a way that I should think absolutely unique. She has done herself injustice in her writings, as she has always hurried through all her books and turned them out at railroad speed for the benefit of the society, but her genius strikes you directly. She has an extraordinary talent for discovering the particular

Frances Willard

S
1894



FRANCES E. WILLARD
From the drawing by Liza Stileman

gifts of everyone she has to work with, a great insight into the possibilities there are in everyone, and the sweetest, most winning manner I ever saw in any human being, with a strong determination to do as she thinks right.

I think during those 3 days everyone was represented, the Catholic Priests spoke, and one day pronounced the Benediction; Mrs. Ballington Booth of the S. Army; the Baptists, Quakers, Methodists, Unitarians, Episcopal Church, Presbyterians, all in perfect harmony, all taking part, and a spirit in the immense meetings of healthy, breezy, progressiveness and God's spirit brooding over all.

Miss Willard is adored in this country. I never saw anyone being so loved; although she is often opposed by her own women, and there is no servility in their affection because she has among her following some of the brightest intellects in the country.

I spoke a good many times, but Sunday was especially exhausting, and I was extra done up afterwards.

The last day after the Convention was really over, and there was only an evening for children, the Aberdeens arrived. I introduced them to Miss Willard and they sat upon the platform and Lady A. said a few words and the next day they came to luncheon with me to meet Miss Willard and little Miss Wilkins, "*The Humble Romance*," — such a dear little girl, so simple and so child-

like. I told her you raved about her books and had given them to me.

Last night I came here. It is a strangely quiet town with rows of red brick houses with white marble steps looking much like the calm solid spirits they have housed since Penn's time.

BALTIMORE

Dec. 1, 1891

MY DARLING

Mrs. Smith is starting today and will post this in England. Your letter dated Nov. 20 came to me yesterday. Such a long interval you had just heard that I did not intend to return — Alas yr letter made me long all the more that I could. Do see Mrs. Pearsall she would be so delighted, she has been so protecting to me and I shall miss her very much, she is like a dear old Mother Hen — she will love to tell you all about America and will be in London now till Christmas if you are going up . . .

I have to lunch at Sorosis the great Woman's Club in New York it is mainly composed of Authors, Musicians, etc. etc. and I shall have to speak which will be most alarming, then one meeting in Brooklyn and then all is over.

No words can say how interesting this country is. I spent one whole night in going with a Mrs. Rüs who wrote "How the Other Half Live" — all thro' the Dives of New York, two detectives went with us. Chinatown is most wonderful. Every

man a Chinese. Their Eating houses beautifully clean and at little tables they quietly sit eating with their chopsticks and looking so subdued and patient. I went through the opium dens, a ghastly sight. They lay about on boards covered with matting and only raised their drowsy heads for a moment when I came — so attenuated, stupid and wretched, you could see how life was sapped away.

Then I saw another more horrible sight, one of the houses where the white women live with the Chinese. They bring no Chinese women with them. On one board there was a young girl perfectly insensible from opium in the middle of a group of Chinese men. A girl coming in looked round and when she saw us she looked for an instant hard and defiant and then poor soul with an instinct of shame she turned and covered the other girl's face with a newspaper. Poor souls, it is a terrible life.

In the train from NIAGARA to MONTREAL
Dec 18

MY DARLING ONE

Your letter by the French steamer was a great success and reached a great deal sooner than the others, in fact quite as soon as those direct from England . . .

The last meeting I had in New York was at Sing Sing Convict prison. The Governor sent to ask me to go. It is about an hour and a half by

train and I went on Sunday. It was so strange to go out of the sunlight into the dark passages with their rows of cage-like cells and at each cage a poor pale face.

The chapel was full of men it was an overpowering sight, their convict dress and shorn heads and poor worn hopeless faces. I cried like a child I was so sorry for them. They were so responsive and touching. The prison itself is dreadful, like a huge menagerie. Still one felt that the very fact that outside pity was let in upon their lives was something. In England no voice but the paid officials is ever heard from year to year. It is a terribly needed reform.

AUBURNDALÉ, MASS.

3 April, 1892, Sunday

. . . I suppose this is almost the last letter I shall write to you for I sail next week and am busy making all preparations and am going to have a large farewell meeting next week. I am very sorry to leave Miss Willard, she is one woman in a million, such a rare combination of a great intellect and childlike simplicity.

I shall have a very busy time when I first get home as the Women's Meetings begin at once and I have five hard days . . . I had a most interesting time in Maine in the City of Portland where the selling of drink is illegal and there I saw all the liquor that had been seized poured down the sewers . . . I had a wonderful meeting

there. I was given 6 immense bouquets all the flags from the English ships hung round the hall and I was given a beautiful portfolio of photographs. My darling your child is spoilt, she has been made so much of.

Lady Henry never lost or changed in her later visits her first impressions of America. To her the charm of this amazing country was its youth.

With all the faults of unformed youth, aggressive, vulgar, crude, it had the virtues of the young, —simplicity, generosity and faith in impossible things. Looking back on her own life she thought she would have preferred to have been born an American.

Did Miss Willard ever wish that she had been born an English aristocrat?

In spite of all that has been said and written about her, nobody has given a clear picture of what she was in herself apart from her work. The English public who saw her or read about her in the newspapers were chilled by the want of the romantic background against which their heroes and heroines must stand . . . "Here," they thought, "is a typical American Christian worker who has nothing to her but her Cause." But Miss Willard must have been far more than this. Was there

anything in the devotion of the celebrated leader of the American Temperance Party to an English great lady that gives a clue to her character?

Brought up on a prairie farm in Wisconsin, hungering as a child for education, hating the narrow life on the lonely farm—"I am fonder of anything outside my sphere than of anything in it," she wrote in her diary when she was fifteen—she at last obtained the education and the freedom that her heart desired. But though she reached the position of Dean of the North Western Female College she was not content. Even a tour in Europe did not give her what she wanted.

Back again in Chicago she sacrificed herself and her interests to the puritan instinct for self-suppression. And found, in the end, that the driving force of character or ambition had raised her to the position of leader of thousands of her countrywomen.

When she met Lady Henry did she realize that the hunger she was born with had not been appeased by her education and culture or by fierce self-denial, that she was starving still for some thing this aristocrat from the Old World possessed and held so lightly? If her Puritan ancestors had handed down to her a nature parched for want of the warmth and beauty of the truths

they had turned their backs on, they had also given her the courage to be generous when she met the woman who was everything she longed to be.

When she had known Lady Henry for two months she wrote to her:

. . . the beauty of you is that you fill so many *rôles* and are so many folks — a sort of diamond edition of Human Nature. No one near me has ever been like you in that. You are my beautiful picture gallery and library, landscape and orchestra “A great hope, a sea to swim in.”

She called her new friend Cosmos.

Four years later, writing from Rest Cottage, she reminds Lady Henry of their first meeting, and confesses that she and her mother had both been alarmed at the prospect of such a guest.

. . . Mother had prayed that we might meet these new conditions in the love of God and be helped by the Spirit to know how to conduct ourselves. I had gone to the train with Nan, another carriage following, so that you and Hannah and your maid might, with us, be well provided for. My inner heart quaked but I too prayed for quietness and got it.

This quietness attracted Lady Henry. She saw in her hostess an ideal puritan who had simplified her life to one steadfast purpose. Miss Willard, watching her guest, thought of a new beatitude: Blessed are the inclusive; for they shall be included. The Old World's catholicism and the New World's puritanism met and each recognized the beauty of the other. At this time Miss Willard was organizing the Prohibition campaign. Lady Henry was not a prohibitionist. She opposed the Drink Trade because it had become a tyranny that forced men to be drunkards; but she believed that, if the claws of the Trade were cut and men were set free to be sober, wine-drinking might be as innocent a pleasure in England and America as it is in Italy and France. Where the two friends differed they respected each other's opinion. Lady Henry learnt from Miss Willard how to organize her work; Miss Willard learnt from Lady Henry how to dress becomingly.

When Lady Henry came home from America she found that all had not gone well in the British Women's Temperance Association while she had been away. The ladies who had, from the first, feared they distrusted their new President were now quite sure of it and were in open rebellion.

They were fighting a hard fight and using strange weapons, careful to hide as far as it was possible the deeper ground of their revolt.

They complained that "Lady Henry Somerset possesses too wide an outlook, too vast an energy, too progressive a mind for our Association"; and the life of their Association is "dear to them from the ties of old memories." The questions at issue between them and their President, they say, are those of "stern principle." With her progressive policy they will have nothing to do. The policy they advocate is that they should "one and all rally around the standard of Total Abstinence, and pursue unswervingly and steadfastly the single straightforward aim, namely, to storm the citadel of the Drink Traffic and sweep it from our midst." And the most ladylike method of storming the citadel is to "inaugurate a systematic, simultaneous and National house to house visitation, when visitors shall call at every house, in every street, of every town and village in the land" — to leave Temperance tracts and pledge cards.

Behind their stern principle and the policy they advocate lies the deepest source of their irritation. Lady Henry's behaviour has recalled the behaviour of Mrs. Margaret Parker who twenty-

six years ago spent "*Six Happy Weeks among the Americans*," and came home to found the B. W. T. A. on an American plan. "Can any one doubt," writes the treasurer of the Association in an open letter to the Branches, "that our grievances have been sent over from America?"

These fiercely British ladies were the Majority on the Executive Committee, and Lady Henry's supporters were in a Minority. For a year their fight was conducted by means of the official organ of the B. W. T. A. (which was in their hands) and by open letters sent to the Branches of the Association scattered up and down England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. To the horror of these ladies of the Majority, Lady Henry Somerset is advocating Woman's Suffrage, has mentioned the opium question and social purity. If the Association adopts the last line of work, they point out, "Mothers will feel unable to bring their daughters to our assemblies, for it is a subject of all others unsuited to young minds." The organ of the World's Women's Christian Temperance Union, they remind their fellow members, "has lately had that in its pages which no modest woman could read without a blush." All these unsuitable questions have come over from America. "Lady Henry's heart is with her American friends

...and the most trying part of it is that Lady Henry Somerset, as our President, can help this betrayal of our Association into their ambushed ranks."

Lady Henry had been right when she told Mrs. Smith that the B. W.s would "tear their hair."

To the Annual Council Meeting of 1893 delegates came from all parts of the country eager for the fight. The supporters of the Majority came to defend their right to be undiluted British; the supporters of the Minority to fight for their President who had proved herself a leader with the power to lead.

Already, since her election to the Presidency in 1890, Lady Henry had been up and down the country speaking at meetings in their towns, raising their Temperance work to a status that the people — including their own men folk — who had laughed at or opposed them before her arrival, must now respect. More than this, she had become their friend. She had stayed in their houses and had established a real personal relation with them.

The upper middle class women admired her, the lower middle class women adored her. How often had she sat in their little drawing-rooms and, forgetting the Cause that had brought her, had

become absorbed in them, their thoughts, their struggles, their restricted lives, and had opened, by her amazing sympathy, undreamt of doors of liberty; not through revolt, but by the kind of acceptance that sets the heart and mind free. And all this not as a great lady condescending to them, rather as the most human friend they had ever known. No wonder they sent delegates to the Annual Meeting charged to tell the Council that the Branches had doubled or trebled their numbers in the past year, and that a change of President would be nothing less than a calamity.

The battle raged unceasingly for twelve hours.

The ladies of the Majority complain that their opponents have descended to miserable personalities — have called them “aged veterans” — “antiquated” — “fossilized” — and have accused them of wearing “moral blinkers.” They summon Savonarola, Emerson, Luther and the Apostle Paul to their aid to prove that the purposes of the Association should be few and great. If the progressive policy of the President is adopted they will become “the ridicule of the licensed victuallers”, but if it is rejected then, they say, “our Association will move upward with a stately grandeur, cleaving her path majestic, honoured and triumphant, for the glorious confirmation of

her noblest aspirations and the approval of our Master."

The delegates by a large majority decided to keep their President. When the result of the ballot was declared, at half-past ten that night, the victors stood up and sang "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

The Majority, now a defeated Minority in the Council, rose and swept from the room.

Next morning it was found that the defeated ladies had retired from the Association. One member alone remained. This was Lady Elizabeth Bidulph, who had decided on constitutional grounds to accept the will of the new Majority. A delegate who passed her chair whispered excitedly, "Oh, Lady Elizabeth, isn't it splendid that we still have our President?" Lady Elizabeth replied sternly, "Your brilliant President will wreck the Association."

CHAPTER VII

WORKERS

ONE of the results of Lady Henry's want of intellectual training was that for lack of critical discrimination she was apt to run into a pen. Sooner or later she discovered herself to be shut in and came out again; along her road she left a good many pens behind that had been too narrow to hold her. She educated herself in this progress, and out of each experience brought some wisdom that was to be useful to her farther on.

The Ledbury Evangelical pen had taught her that she must never again distrust her sense of humour. Now, in her work in the British Women's Temperance Association, she was able to pause and laugh at herself and her companions. So many of them had bees in their bonnets. There was the food reform lady who ate and pressed on others food that looked like a disgusting variety of dog biscuit. There was the old maid who seized the opportunity of every public meeting to thank her Maker for her "potential Motherhood." And there was the lecturer who roused the Branches to passionate

appeals to Headquarters not to send her their way again because she oiled herself all over, removed the sheets from her bed, and then slept between their best blankets.

The ladies who specialized in Social Purity it was best to shut out of your mind. Lady Henry had given all her attention to Temperance and had left the Purity Question to the women who had a taste for it. The trouble with them was that they did have a taste for it. No moment was safe, in their society, from the sink they would suddenly empty on your head. She decided that there was something all wrong with the way in which this question was approached. If it had been her job, she thought, she would have tried to eliminate all emotion, and then calmly look the facts in the face. She was glad it was not her job.

With the help of Miss Willard and the most intelligent women in the British Women's Temperance Association she was getting on with her own work. She was speaking to large audiences in all the big towns of the British Isles, and everywhere she went people were beginning to discuss the drink problem seriously. She was also teaching the rank and file of the Association to take a wider view of the whole question, to get away

in their thinking from what was a local to what was a national concern. She had brought over from America Moody's idea of a School of Methods, and this school she conducted herself wherever the Executive Committee or the National Council met. Here the British Women were taught how to serve on a committee, how to take the chair; and were guided through the mazes of the amendment to the amendment. They were also taught how to speak at public meetings, what not to wear on a platform, how not to tire an audience by a shrill or monotonous voice, and the importance of avoiding the mannerisms of most parliamentary speakers. These were the things she had taught herself.

Bareheaded, in a black dress, standing quite still, without one gesture, she could hold an audience of thousands for an hour on what had been considered till then the dullest subject on earth. Even the critical few who thought there was too much sentiment mixed with her facts were attracted by her personality, her sincerity, and the wonderful quality of her voice. Low and clear, without an effort, it reached the farthest gallery of the big halls she spoke in, and not a word was lost. Nobody who heard her could have guessed that she had been sick from stage fright for hours

before the meeting, and that confidence had only come to her when she felt her audience respond. When the meeting was over her one desire was to go home quickly and forget it.

Miss Willard never understood this distaste of Lady Henry's for publicity and the strenuous life. She herself breathed best in an atmosphere of meetings. When she came to Eastnor Castle or Reigate Priory she brought a train of secretaries, stenographers and typists, and surrounded herself with a constant racket of work: telegrams and cables going out or coming in all day long — newspaper men waiting for interviews — important visitors arriving that could not be put off. The Press was her world and "arousement" her motto. Her typists were kept busy sending off by every post "seed thoughts" to the newspapers. Her notion of recreation was to sit down and work out another bright idea for the reformation of the world.

For Lady Henry relaxation was all too easy. One of her most engaging qualities was a natural frivolity, an appreciation of the delicate line that separates the serious from the priggish, that made her turn quickly from solemn things to laugh and talk and gossip over the fire. She thought Miss Willard a far wiser and better

woman than she could ever hope to be, and at the same time she was amused by her friend's childlike ignorance of the world they lived in, and by the bright ideas for its improvement that were constantly springing to her mind.

One of these ideas was the Polyglot Petition; to it Miss Willard's thoughts returned as a small boy's thoughts return to his dream of being a pirate.

The Polyglot Petition could only have sprung from America. It was a petition from the women of the world to the representatives of every civilized government in the world. "Honoured Rulers, Representatives and Brothers," it began. "We, your petitioners, although belonging to the physically weaker sex, are strong of heart to love our homes, our native land and the world's family of nations." After a good deal more in the same manner it concluded with this simple request: "beseeching you to raise the standard of the law to that of Christian morals."

Christian workers all over the world had collected several million signatures written in fifty languages, and workers in America had trimmed, prepared and mounted them on muslin half a yard wide, bound at one edge with red, white and blue ribbon. One lady had pasted

on over a mile of muslin four columns of names, that altogether made five miles of signatures.

Only a small proportion of these millions of signatures had come from England. People had complained that it was indefinite and had no particular aim, "the prevalance of Influenza and the illness and weakness that followed" had damped the enthusiasm of the workers.

It was Miss Willard's pride that the Polyglot Petition had been "the peg upon which have been hung paragraphs and presentation speeches, sermons and songs, in every part of Christendom." Its miles of muslin had draped the walls of the buildings where American women met to discuss the Temperance Cause, and it had travelled over to England where "its folds encircled the galleries and platform of the Albert Hall."

Miss Willard's dream was of the day when Lady Henry would charter a ship and sail with her and the Polyglot Petition around the world. They would anchor at the port of the first civilized country they met, unload the Petition and present it to the country's "Honoured Rulers", then roll it up again, reship it, and sail on to the next civilized land. Lady Henry hated the sea, and from her knowledge of the "Honoured Rulers" of the world she thought it would take more than

the arrival at their ports of several miles of muslin backed by women's signatures in fifty languages, to turn their hearts into the way of Christian morals. But rather than damp Miss Willard's enthusiasm she had a copy of the petition and its signatures compressed into two well-bound volumes, and presented it to Queen Victoria. The original petition lingered in England and finally went back to America.

Lady Henry's idea of what was likely to move rulers and legislators was expressed in her evidence before the Royal Commission on Liquor Licensing Laws in the spring of 1897. Mrs. Pearsall Smith, writing after a Council Meeting in London of the British Women's Temperance Association, describes her success:

June 9th 1897

. . . It goes without saying that Lady Henry was the delight of all eyes at the Council; there is an indescribable charm about her that somehow disarms all criticism and carries every heart captive, and she can do anything she pleases with her women whenever she chooses to take the trouble. She had just come from a piece of work which had made us very proud of her. There has been sitting for some months a Royal Commission on the liquor question before which all the evidence that can be collected is to be brought.

Lady Henry had been for some weeks collecting evidence, and just before our Council meeting she went before the Commission to give it. They say it was the best evidence that was given and that in cross examination she was inimitable, far surpassing any other witness they had had before them. All the efforts of the brewers on the Commission to trip her up signally failed, and in fact she turned the tables so adroitly on themselves that after one or two had tried their hands the rest of her opponents begged off from any further cross examination. She had the most damaging maps of different sections of London showing how crowded the public houses were in the poor parts of London and how absolutely free the rich parts were. Those who heard her say her evidence was simply incontrovertible.

The British Women's Temperance Association was so well pleased with their President's triumph that for the moment it forgot that it had a grievance against her. This was to be remembered later.

The Times had published, about a month before, a letter from Lady Henry to Lord George Hamilton, the Secretary of State for India, on the subject of the Contagious Diseases Act. Lord George had sent her a copy of his "Despatch to the Government of India regarding the measures to be adopted for Checking the Spread of

Venereal Diseases among the British Troops in India," telling her at the same time that he would be most "glad and grateful" if she could write him a letter on the subject.

Against her will she had at last been forced to give her attention to the unsavoury question of Social Purity. She realized that she was putting her head into a den of tigers; but somebody must do it, and her position at the moment seemed to single her out for the disagreeable task. Up till now the Purity workers, both men and women, had gone mad and foamed at the mouth when those mysterious letters C. D. were mentioned. Not one of them had dared to look dispassionately at the question and face the fury of his or her fellow workers. Lady Henry wrote her letter to Lord George Hamilton, then counted the cost of her temerity and sent the letter to the post.

In her letter she first explained that she was solely responsible for the opinions she expresses and was purposely acting without the assistance of those with whom she had on former occasions been associated:

. . . May I at once express to your Lordship, (she writes,) my extreme gratification at finding

incorporated in a document of such importance a statement of inspiring and controlling principles, at once the only ones on which it appears to me that the Government can successfully and honourably undertake the mitigation and cure of this dreadful scourge, and, what is perhaps more significant, principles which have never before been professed by any previous Government of Her Majesty in connection with this dreadful subject.

These, if I may rehearse them, are first the express order of your Lordship that nothing should be done that can be represented as an encouragement to vice. Secondly, not content with this negative provision, your Lordship recognises the paramount importance of raising the moral tone of the Indian Army by promising the hearty "approval and support of Her Majesty's Government to any suggestion for renewed and extended efforts to improve the moral and physical condition of the British troops in India, and enlarge the means of their instruction, occupation and recreation."

She notes "with satisfaction" that Lord George "by including this disease in the category of other contagious diseases, indicates the only rational and scientific principle on which its eradication can be attempted." And she sums up, giving as her opinion:

Should sufficient be done to render the rectification of the Government's moral attitude perfectly clear, the way would be open, if necessary, for dealing with the evil on scientific lines, without the Government being open to the charge of indifference to the ethical results of its action . . . The difficulty in dealing with the physiological aspects of this question has been the reconciliation of the moral and scientific problems, and I submit one of the main reasons why former attempts have been immoral is because they have been also unscientific. The C. D. Acts were in reality as little concerned with the extirpation of the disease as with the inculcation of good morals. Had they been consistently framed with the object of preventing the spread of infection altogether, they would probably have served the cause of morality as well. But bad logic and bad morals went together. My Lord, it is sound and ruthless logic that is required. The old system sought to guard the men against contagion by women. It did nothing to guard the women against contagion by the men. Make your system relentlessly strict as far as preventing any diseased person of either sex from poisoning another, and you will have done the only thing that is scientifically defensible; while the publicity, discipline and supervision it must imply, may prove one of the most effective moral safeguards that can be devised.

She went on to make a few suggestions for putting such a measure into practice.

The first howl of the Purity workers was an earnest of the execrations to come. Christian ladies rushed into print to accuse her of having thrown herself with gusto on the side of wickedness and crime, and of conniving at State Regulation of Vice. Disease, they declare, is God's punishment for sin. If there were any who had the intelligence to see that she had done some useful and courageous thinking on the subject, they were afraid to admit it. The most virulent of these outraged ladies were two American "Uplifters" who a few years before had been Lady Henry's guests at Eastnor Castle.

If Lady Henry had followed her own inclinations she would have been silent till the storm blew over. She wrote to Miss Willard in America:

Whether I am right or wrong I mean to keep the silence which "answered never a word." That is the one strength. I have said my say, time is my judge, time will prove if I am right, and I am content.

Miss Willard was ill and these attacks on her friend which increased in venom as the year went on were a constant distress to her. She did

not agree with Lady Henry's views but she longed to defend the sincerity of her purpose. "What any Christian is thinking of who employs vituperation I cannot imagine," she wrote to Lady Henry.

The most perfect expression of the uplifter mind reached Miss Willard in the late summer of that year in a letter written by one of the two ladies mentioned before:

. . . I am praying daily, hourly, and Mrs X. is praying too concerning Lady Henry Somerset. . . . I know God and I know He has heard and will hear our prayers, and that now the time is not long when that miserable woman's public career will be ended. I would not harm a hair of her head; I would not add a feather weight to the burden of her guilty heart; I would rather she should do all the smiling she can until she awakes in another world. . . . Possibly you may think if you could see us you could explain Lady Henry's position. You have no possible and creditable way of explaining why her praises are on the lips of every libertine and advocate of vice from Lord Roberts down . . .¹

And you are silent; even after appeal you are silent. And do you think God holds you guiltless

¹ This fanatical lady's knowledge of Lord Roberts's character appears to have been as cocksure and as limited as her knowledge of the Almighty. She would have been prepared to swear that every British soldier in India was a libertine.

for this silence? Do you think the American women will hold you guiltless? I know they will not; I know they do not — for Lady Henry's hateful letter to Lord George Hamilton is already in many hands, and the press will soon carry it to the hands of all the women of the W. C. T. U., and then the women will fully know that you were silent while the leader next in rank to yourself in the W. C. T. U. was treacherously betraying the cause of womanhood. May God pity you. I do. You have a heart and you have a conscience and in these regards you are perhaps less fortunate than Lady Henry Somerset, since you have chosen to let your vote go with hers by this silence. You cannot kill conscience, you cannot even harden your heart, and when in your eclipsed old age you recall that you made such a mistake you will not know how to find place for repentance on this earth . . .

Oh, that you had never met that woman of fatal fascination, to whom you swore that nothing would separate you from her, in either this world or the world to come, and nothing has separated you, as far as it appears — not even infamy as yet.

Lady Henry made no reply to the attacks on her character. She was trying to explain her position to the women in England who cared for her and were bewildered by the storm her letter

to Lord George Hamilton had raised about them. Her statement made to her Executive Committee shows how far she had travelled from her first Evangelical pen. She had come to think, she told them, "that all sin or rather sense of sin is relative. The code of ethics is moulded by the stage of evolution which the individual or the community has reached. The handling of great moral questions like Temperance and Purity is only easy to the ignorant; it is utterly outside the power of those who legislate to make the commission of moral offence in itself punishable, because that would be at once to interfere with the liberty of the subject. What ought to be done is to make the consequences of sin punishable if the welfare of the many is harmed by the act of the few."

Then came the news from America that Miss Willard was dying and that the attacks of the Uplifters on Lady Henry's character were breaking her heart. "Under all the stress of thy life and the monotonous seclusion of mine, the same loyalty holds and will hold for ever," she wrote.

The thought of Miss Willard's distress was more than Lady Henry could bear. She cabled to America that she had written to Lord George

Hamilton retracting her first letter to him. The following is her second letter:

EASTNOR CASTLE,
LEDBURY,
January 27, 1898

DEAR LORD GEORGE HAMILTON,

Your Lordship invited me ten months ago to give you my view of the despatch that had been addressed to the Government of India on the health of the Army, and in a letter in which I did so, I ventured to suggest some methods, moral and disciplinary, which seemed to me the only ones likely to succeed, because they had at least the merit of being logical.

I was led to do so by two considerations. First, the despatch in question seemed to imply that the Government would give every encouragement in every form of elevating agency, and so emphasize the altered spirit in which the subject was approached, and that such suggested supervision would only affect an incorrigible minimum; and second, that the system I had in mind would be so drastic and penal in its nature as to make State interference odious and finally impossible. That was ten months ago; and in that time nothing has been done of which the public has heard, to strengthen the forces that make for moral improvement. What has been done, viz: the repeal of the Indian Acts of 1895, which prohibited inspection, has been in a direction exactly opposite.

It seems to have been the object of the Government to obtain the maximum of impunity with the minimum of protest, from those who desire to see the State shape its actions according to Christian views of ethics.

I need not tell your Lordship I am not writing to say how strongly I am still opposed to the course which the Government has taken; but I find that my letter to your Lordship of last year has been taken by many to mean that I am on the side of the accepted view of State regulation, and I am from time to time quoted as a sympathizer with such views. I am, therefore, writing to withdraw any proposals made in that letter for this reason: that the events of the past year have convinced me of the inadvisability and extreme danger of the system that in April last I thought might be instituted. The absence of any serious effort by the Government to bring about a higher standard in the Army is a final proof to me, that as long as regulation of any kind can be resorted to as a remedy, it will always be regarded as the one and only panacea. My view was that it would be instituted as an odious but possibly effective auxiliary to moral efforts. I find it will always be accepted as a convenient substitute. I take the liberty of addressing this explicit withdrawal of an endorsement in whatever form of the principle of regulation, because it was in a letter to your Lordship that I originally incurred the responsibility. I trust, therefore, to your Lord-

ship's indulgence to forgive me for troubling you further in the matter.

I remain, my Lord,
Yours very truly,
ISABEL SOMERSET.

Miss Willard's mind was set at rest by the cable. She thought the retraction would put an end to the attacks on Lady Henry and that she would hand on her position as President of the World's Women's Christian Temperance Union to her friend. A fortnight later she died.

Lady Henry was under no delusion as to the attitude of the Uplifters. She knew the gulf between her opinions and theirs would never be closed. She was right.

An open letter headed "Let us be consistent" was sent out by an American lady. In this letter the writer tells her fellow countrywomen that she has received a document from England,— "minutes of Evidence Taken Before the Royal Commission on Liquor Licensing Laws," the contents of which have confirmed a doubt that has become one of the greatest griefs of her life. "However high the position of Lady Henry Somerset," she writes, "because of family, title, wealth; however shining her abilities, however

pure her character, she is utterly unfitted to be the leader of the W. C. T. U.”

To prove her point she gives the following extracts from Lady Henry’s answers to the questions put to her by this Licensing Commission:

31,636. Do you think that simply drinking by itself is wrong? — No, I cannot say that I do.

31,637. May I assume that if there were no such thing as immoderate drinking there would be no need of any of the organizations with which you are connected? — None whatever.

31,638. Would you wish to make everybody a teetotaler? — No, I should not wish to interfere with anybody who chose to take alcohol in moderate quantities. I believe that in the present exigency that people can do a great deal more good by adopting very radical means of getting rid of an evil which is widespread.

31,639. You would not wish that men should be made teetotalers by Act of Parliament? — No, I should not believe in it.

31,640. Therefore I may say you are not in favour of Prohibition? — I should certainly not be in favour of Prohibition by act of Parliament. I think I should be in favour of such education that it would lead to an inanition of the trade.

It was enough. A woman who held such views was not up to the standard of the W. C. T. U.

But in spite of the fierce opposition of the Uplifters, Lady Henry was made President of the W. C. T. U. at the next election. She paid one more visit to America; then in 1906 declined to stand again for re-election.

In 1903 she resigned her position of President of the British Women's Temperance Association; and the Association settled down to the quiet respectability from which she had raised it. The women who had loyally followed her looked back with regret to the Golden Age of her reign over them.

CHAPTER VIII

HERSELF

WHEN HER public work was over, after some time spent in a settlement in the East End of London, Lady Henry decided to make her home at Duxhurst.

The gap that a disastrous marriage had made in her life had never been filled; she was still a lonely woman. Perhaps no human friend could have given her the companionship she needed; she had come to think of it as something for which she was not yet ready. When people talked glibly in her presence of "knowing God" she imagined they must be better than she was, for with her religion was still a "great exploration." She looked forward to an intimacy that the slow and sure knowledge of experience would bring, but that knowledge was still so far from complete that it left large empty spaces for loneliness. To the adventure of seeking she gave her mind. The best place to seek, she thought, was where a God of love, being most needed, was most likely to be found.

Duxhurst was a colony for inebriate women that she had started, in 1895, near Reigate in Surrey. There she had built herself a cottage where she had often stayed for weeks at a time, training the workers according to her idea of how such a colony should be managed. For the future this cottage and a small flat in London were to be her home.

Except for the few women who helped her, the chaplain and the men who did the farm work, there was not a stable human being in the colony. From the "ladies by birth" in retreat at the Manor House to the "jail-birds" in some of the cottages there was not a class of society unrepresented, and not a sin from drunkenness to murder that had not been responsible for some one's presence; for it was not long before the success of Duxhurst tempted people who had difficult cases of other kinds of moral lapses on their hands than drunkenness, to bring them to Lady Henry. Some of these were sent to her by the Home Office.

Lady Henry saw in them all fellow creatures very much like herself. Physically they were often woefully out of order when they arrived, but when the body had been mended by the doctor's care and by rest in the colony hospital, the line that

separated these sinners from the righteous in the outside world was so thin that it could scarcely be said to exist. What separated such unstable people from the conventionally good was the thing they both had in common, and this was Fear.

It was to some purpose that Lady Henry had been cut by society, that she had been hurried down the back stairs of her sister's house. The shame, the indignation, the helplessness, had given her a clue to what Jesus Christ had known. Innocent or guilty, what hurt was loneliness. You were cast out because most people were cowards. Good people were afraid of sinners, and the secret Jesus Christ understood was that sinners were afraid of themselves. She felt herself so completely in the shoes of the women under her care that she realized their shame or their want of it, their bitter pride, their hopelessness. Like Dostoevsky's Father Zossima she "knelt to their suffering." In some cases it was a suffering so great and so persistent that only death would set them free from it.

The first step towards restoration was to give them back their lost self-respect. Everything that suggested punishment must be banished from their minds. Their daily life must be as normal as, and if possible more interesting than,

the life they had come from. She included a home for children in the colony to break up the monotony of seeing only women about.

The right atmosphere having been created for the community as a whole, there was the individual to be considered. Self-respect was restored to each woman according to her need; sometimes the first step towards it was accomplished by the gift of a pair of stays or a becoming hat.

Lady Henry relied on the chaplain and the teaching of the church to show the women the way out of fear.

The chapel at Duxhurst had been built in the days when her sympathy was with the evangelical school, but it had changed its tone and its appearance as she herself had slowly gone back to the preference of her youth for St. Paul's, Brighton. When at last she had made it all she wished it to be, a stranger, who did not understand the elasticity of the Church of England, would have been puzzled to know where he was. More than one bishop had felt the same bewilderment. Gaily coloured walls, pictures, statues, lamps burning, a side chapel, flowers, candles, incense, gorgeous vestments, the confessional,—there may have been others like it in England

but if so they too were inspired by the spirit of Italy. The Italians know how to make their House of God look homely; a place where a child will go alone when he feels inclined to say his prayers.

Lady Henry's instinct was right. The women loved the chapel. It was unlike anything they had seen before and had none of the dreary associations bound up in their minds with the Church of England. Hardly at any time of the day was it empty; somewhere in its warm and scented shelter a woman would be found kneeling or sitting quietly looking around at everything.

The chaplain who helped Lady Henry best was the man who knew that it was in her sitting-room that the women found the way back to stability. That sitting-room had all the gaiety, warmth and colour of the chapel, with a wide windowsill always full of pots of growing flowers. Here she spent sometimes ten hours a day of hard work, seeing the women one by one. Out of her own consciousness of what was wanted she had evolved and anticipated some of the methods of modern psychology,—“to find the bitterness at the back of the mind and get rid of it.”

She would not have called her way of going to

work a method. Each morning she rose at six o'clock, and before breakfast spent an hour or more in the chapel. Here she prepared her mind by what a Quaker would call recollection, what a Catholic has called "the Practice of the Presence of God." She prayed for her family, and her friends, and their needs; for herself, remembering the failures and mistakes of her life, and for the women she was to see that day. When the day's work had begun she paused after each interview to go into her little oratory and pray again before she sent for the next woman on her list. Only the women themselves know what she said to them. Possibly they did most of the talking, while she listened. She once told a friend that as she listened to a woman's story she felt that she had done the same thing herself.

Discussing her among themselves they found she had removed a load from their minds simply by understanding it was there. One girl, who had gone into her sitting-room with a millstone of her own folly and her family's indignation round her neck, told a friend that she had not known the world could hold such an understanding person as Lady Henry. When the friend said, "Perhaps that is God's way," the girl, jealous for Lady Henry's reputation, said indignantly,

"We are not taught that God is anything like that."

One of the ladies at the Manor House said, "If I had committed a murder I should go to Lady Henry because I know she would help me to hide the body."

A woman who had gone away from Duxhurst again and again and come back as often, gave as her experience: — "though she knew I was wrong she would help me to get out of the mess. The first thing she would say was, 'Now we must think what we can do. Leave it to me.' You wouldn't have to bother then. You'd have to pay in a way, but the relief that you were going to get out of it was so great that you wouldn't mind paying."

That there is something to be said for Lady Henry's method is also shown in the following story. She was staying in a London hotel for a night. When she went down to dinner, she left on the dressing table a valuable broach; she hurried up again, but it was gone. Instead of doing her duty by at once reporting the theft to the manager, she said to herself, "Some poor soul has been tempted, perhaps by the need of money," and put the loss of the broach out of her mind. Some years after she was staying in the same

hotel. The first night, when she went to her bedroom, she found on her dressing table a small parcel addressed to herself; opening the paper she found a match box and in it her lost broach.

After her day's work at Duxhurst, it would have been a relief to be frivolous, but unless she had a visitor, there was no one in the colony with whom she could "hibernate" — as she called it by her sitting-room fire, and her evenings were often very dull. Replying to a letter from a cousin she writes:

I do not know anybody whom I know so slightly who has attracted me so much as Mrs. Benson. I have always felt what a blessing her friendship must be to Adeline. I often think of the people I want to know by and by in the big beyond, and she is on my list. Meanwhile one has to go on pegging away with less interesting and invigorating people — which is all good and wholesome like plain food.

Seventeen years before this time, when she was alone at Eastnor she had kept a diary; now she began again:

Duxhurst, 1907

. . . always feel uncertain how far it is right to

reprove, it is so difficult that perhaps I feel it too much. I don't know, I will try and see.

Jan. 1

Mrs. G. made her confession . . . what deep shame these dear souls always cause me so dwarfed and stunted while they are growing and spreading.

The initials used have been changed in every case in these extracts.

Jan. 2

. . . lovely starlight night which was calming. Why is it that some days seem like a ground swell to churn up every dreg in one's heart and bring things that have lain quietly underneath for years to the surface, and all the waste and refuse of bygone times to float up to the eyes. Well, but so it is and the only thing seems to be to keep a firm hold and try and go on.

Jan. 5

. . . fears for subscriptions on account of confession here. Oh how condemned I am at my past extravagance now. I should have had money to help out.

London

Jan. 7

. . . to dinner and play, the Doctors' Dilemma. Bernard Shaw. I saw it before with Father

Marsen. It is wonderfully witty but part of it I really hate. Death is grotesque and the act of dying a pathetic joke. The whole thing is really bad because nothing is great or good and everything absurd or worse and yet how amusing it is!

Some members of her family are going abroad.

God keep the dear ones who start tomorrow safe and well till they come back, and have us all in His close keeping. Mama was so dear and like herself in putting all sorts of remedies together for them to take.

London

Jan. 12

. . . afterwards we walked part of the way home. Oh the horror of a big city. The streams of people, the hard cruel faces. The sad sorrowful lives — the men with wickedness and selfishness stamped on them, the women that cannot be unlike, and all these Our Lord serves and they don't care or they don't know it.

Lady Somers is dying

What about Mama, who knows . . . She was just herself full of sympathy interest and pride.

Staying with her sister Adeline

. . . Then home to dinner. Honor Ward is here it seems as though the clock was put back

and Rachel stood again in Chesham Place. I wonder does one ever feel old, I think not — it is the immortal in each wh. makes the perennial youth and wh. is only sometimes overweighted by the body. I can seldom feel any difference — things seem as absorbingly interesting — only perhaps one holds each one more loosely, and when joy comes our way “kisses it as it flies,” knowing it must fly — and sometimes glad it should if the supreme peace reigns which is beyond joy.

Jan. 24

. . . after meeting tonight a woman came up and whispered in my ear “I am Mrs. B. I have been at Duxhurst I am doing well.” It was worth the whole evening.

Duxhurst

Jan. 28

Fetchd at one o'clock this morning to the woman in D. T. and had to stay there till 5.30 a.m. A terrible night, Doctor came and gave woman chloroform with good result — but she was nearly gone and her contortions were most terrible and shrieks heart-rending. I shall never forget the horror of the long hours . . . Poor Miss T. brought back, I am so sad about it. No more 3 months patients.

. . . I have fussed too much and consequently

talked too much, oh the power of silence who can overrate it.

Jan. 29

. . . saw Miss T. I did not know what to settle and yet felt very uncertain how to act tho' I prayed much. I could have put personal pressure but is this best — I feel each one learns best as they feel their own responsibility — poor thing how much she has to learn.

Jan. 31

. . . Miss T. much on my mind . . . I wrote to Dr. Paton I could not go with Ld. and Ly. William Cecil on mission to the Empress of China — it sounds like a delicious fairy tale. Oh how I sh. have loved it.

Feb. 1

. . . I tried to talk to Miss T. about peace, it seemed unreal but it was not, the wonderful peace of giving up to God. I do know it although I am always trying to snatch back morsels I want to keep, and have no generosity in surrender — still I know what the peace of giving in means.

Poor soul she is storm tossed. I am very tired.

London

Feb. 2

. . . dined with Adeline . . . What limitations we all have and how fettered I feel when I come

into an atmosphere now which has movement in it and much knowledge of stir and events . . . but thought is seldom discussed, perhaps it is not worth while — . . . is that worth while which makes all the difference . . . She is most kind and dear but I don't think she knows how one hungers to be talked to when life is very restricted, it is like a little income to which every penny is of such importance.

Feb. 9

Went in the evening to the opening of the parish room at St. John's very tiring and rather wearying. The Dean of W. was there he looks like a rather nice looking man in a spoon so drawn out and narrow.

Feb. 12

. . . Then to Bourdon Street to see the Sister Superintendent. I asked her about the girls.

I am so sure it is not work for nuns and I am so sure the girls sh. have their babies near at hand and not hidden away in shame.

Can nuns understand — their own lives so far away, hidden in such eternal snow.

I don't think so.

Feb. 13

A happy day, Communion at 8 in the little chapel of the All Saint Sisters.

A little worried by the intercessions for the rich, but perhaps I didn't understand.

Feb. 15

Early Mass at All Saints. I was very happy it seemed like my young days with nothing between, as though God really did bind up the broken ends of life and He does.

Duxhurst

Feb. 22

. . . Guild meeting — supper and bed, feeling rather ill, I hope it will pass as I have a heavy week.

I wonder if I am right to have classes it seems presumptuous, I don't know. I wish someone else were here to take them — I who know so little and seem each day to know less.

Feb. 25

. . . better but feeling very weak and very cross I am ashamed to own.

Doctor came. Got up in afternoon but everything wrong, no fire no hot water and all the tiny foolish trials of an inefficient household — . . .

A long tedious weary day. Miss T. went away. Too unwell to feel sorry.

Feb. 26

Better — the night was so beautiful and full of heavenly things. I am very stuffy and weak

but mending fast and the soft air is a boon, the birds are singing and spring seems really near.

Adeline was most kind and sent her footman down with a hamper of comforts — turtle soup and chicken and jelly and all sorts, it was very good of her — I was quite glad to see the grim Henry come up the garden path.

Feb. 28

. . . afterwards met Nest children — ran at me with such joy — “are you better, do you know there is a girl in our school says the world is going to be burnt up tomorrow” — all in one breath.

A meeting at Oxford.

March 8

. . . Oh how I hate meetings, they are so bad for the soul, so somehow lowering to catch human thought by much which you know is superficial but soon it will be over for me.

March 10

Left for Sheffield — got my poor old barrel organ into some order, hall crowded and very warm greeting.

London

March 19

. . . Mrs. Y. was coming to breakfast. She made me very happy for she said she had been

nursing a cousin dying of cancer — one who had no faith — and she said so simply — I brought her comfort and she changed when I told her all I was taught at Duxhurst —

My heart leaps up with joy.

March 22

. . . at 5 to Rachel's to hear the Bishop of I. on the heart of the Empire, excellent in every way.

The Princess was kind and nice and he very charming. I enjoyed the lecture and I felt there was a really earnest desire to learn among the women there — Lady Salisbury was so nice and kind — people I had not seen for years and years were there.

Then drove back in Rachel's wonderful motor in less than an hour.

Then Compline and now to bed — Glad to be home.

Duxhurst

March 23

. . . afternoon saw the two new government cases . . . One . . . seemed to realize how far away she had gone.

It was interesting to hear her describe what she thought this place would be like "Great red brick plice with 'igh walls, I couldn't believe me eyes when I see them wide fields" The other

younger — had been drinking about 6 years, poor things they both seemed happy to be here.

March 31 Easter Day.

. . . sordid worries possessed me. Oh to have nothing, to be really poor and so have no cares.

I will work for that end with a real will God being my helper.

April 2

. . . saw W. who leaves on Saturday. She is a dear woman both she and M. were weeping at leaving — I can't bear to go — she said — this has been the happiest year of my life — and back she goes to a little back street and a husband none too kind.

"When I came I had never seen the country but now ain't it wonderful and wide — I see things I should never have looked at before I came."

After signing the pledge and praying we parted.

April 16

. . . I had felt terrible depressed when I got up today it seemed to me all oppressively narrow — would it always be so — should we grow contented with the straightened outlook of one little world? it seemed interminable. I went before dressing into my study and sat before the fire then I looked up and saw the crucifix — the outstretched arms of suffering are in the attitude of

love — real inclusiveness can never narrow — this suffering of Christ that takes in the whole world — and so suffering with Him is the one big thing.

Everything looked small and petty we call big beside it — it alone endures for ever.

I must to bed.

April 18

A wearisome day with a bitter N. E. wind . . . to the Manor to sort blankets curtains etc. and all sorts of dull things . . . much worried about finance here. We must pull up somehow . . . then to see Mrs. J. who has been troublesome. I must work hard tomorrow to see the women. I seem to have done nothing and yet I have worked all day long and am very tired — as I wrote these words I looked up and in the deep blue of the night sky hangs the crescent moon — one twig of the tree is outlined against its light — the near and familiar the far off and mysterious — and the beautiful night is wonderful and consoling.

Everything is big and quiet and great only one's spirits are fretful and jarring and small.

April 20

Started for London at 7 oc. with D. — went with her to Euston. The Salvation Army special was waiting and the people were already arriving — she was very brave and calm. I never saw anything so well organised. There is a wonderful

fascination to me in these dear people — as I looked at their faces . . . grave and yet so happy it seemed to me that here are the Brothers and Sisters of the Common Life — The band was playing well known hymns — the bandsmen had taken an hour from their work to come there in order to put heart into the departing emigrants. Many men rough and weather beaten from Hadley were going — some quite young women of the more educated class, and many young men . . . Col. Lamb has a wonderful face.

April 22

This morning went to Breakfast and put it to the women whether C. was to stay. Every hand held up. They will care for her now. Their charity keeps her here.

April 26

Before going to sleep read a most delightful story of Balzac's on La Terreur.

May 1

I met —— after more than 20 years. He held out both hands . . . Thank God the little animosities die — the big broad love remains.

May 26

Father C. preached . . . He strikes me as a wonderfully holy man — There is a look in his face as though the inner chamber of his heart

was a place which he kept for God — a look out into the world as though some one gazed out of a window into the street and then went back into the quiet of the living room again.

May 30

. . . I had yesterday such a kind letter from N. R. It did me good, kind words always make one want to do better and to deserve them more, praise is the most humbling thing in the world.

Duxhurst from Chenies

June 1

Got up early and came home, the rain poured and I felt as I always do out of joint and difficult to fit into my place for the first hour — even after 3 days threads get loose, and it is hard to number blankets and tables and beds within five minutes — and then always ashamed it should be so.

June 8

. . . saw F. long talk. I was too eager to talk and to defend. Oh golden silence when shall I possess that fortune . . . Oh to be right in my own soul before I judge others. I also am so arid and dull and blunt.

June 9

. . . I must take hold of the place and really hold it or else life is wasted — the loneliness of it all seems sometimes to overwhelm me but this

has to become greater not less — it will have to be the wilderness I know it and I shrink from it.

June 10

. . . saw patients nearly all day. Oh how condemned I feel when I hear them — I long to kneel down and say — ‘so have I, so have I’ — Mrs. C. today touched me specially and I tried hard to tell her and talk to her from my heart — poor child, I believe she will try.

Chenies

June 13

. . . arrived Chenies for tea with Mama — who is looking really better — very resting to be here — how strange it is the way those who are really travelling towards home get gleams from the other side of wisdom and illumination they never had to such a degree before — what strikes me about her is her profound wisdom now that she sits apart and realizes in proportion.

June 15

Left Chenies early . . . Made my confession — Yes, charity, that is the sum total of all — I need long suffering, humility, gentleness, forbearance — it is all true, oh how I mean to ask God for it — and yet when I got home and found Mrs E. dying and things all awry — angry with F. I felt just as hard and rebellious against what I thought injustice as ever and just as determined to show I

would have my own way. Oh how I wish and wish I could only be what I want to be.

The little girl is dying — sat with her till past midnight and the poor agonised husband — both only 29.

Her poor sad eyes turned in torture to beg to be relieved. I never felt more sorry for anyone to see that pretty tender little child suffering so terribly — Tired out.

June 16

. . . then to Mrs. E. she was dying . . . oh how terrible death is — how haunting the silence. The doors for ever closed after the outgoing spirit, and the dress of the spirit alone remaining lying at the door — left behind no longer needed . . .

I put lilies at the head of the bed, my ivory crucifix and church lights.

And the little figure — so full of life a week ago still and stiff under the white sheet.

May the souls of the Faithful by the Mercy of God rest in peace . . .

The poor broken hearted lonely boy is under my roof tonight — God give us of His great love to open wide our arms to each other and all the world.

Chenies

June 23

. . . at dinner Lord Halifax, Sir E. Doyle, Mrs. Lane Fox and her husband and Lady Cunliffe.

I sat between Lord Halifax and Father Congreve. A delightful time. I think Lord Halifax is the most taking person I ever met — he has the enthusiasm of 20, indeed far more for 20 is usually ashamed of enthusiasm — and a *joie de vivre* wh. is infectious — after dinner they all left in their motor so we went first to Mama and then to bed.

July 1

. . . Then to London — found a large influential platform for a little meeting — Lord R. Cecil something wonderfully distinguished and charming about him.

Mrs. Humphrey Ward read a paper, Dr. Sharlieb and Sir Thos. Barlow spoke, and I spoke very badly . . . The humiliation of speaking badly before Mrs. H. W. and Lord R. and George Alexander very good for me — it keeps me low and I need it.

July 8

. . . the draggings of the things I want to do. — the longings for the world of art and literature — and the aridity of the uneventful life — as I write I am ashamed of the words but they are in my heart all the time.

July 18

Mrs. C. made her first confession. "Oh the peace of the place" she kept on saying — afterwards I saw L. she also had made her confession

"I never knew what it meant" she said, "straight it was something bad but the peace it brings is like heaven."

July 21 Visitors arrive from London

. . . We sat under a tree and talked, it was strange to hear of all the people and things which seem so far away and so curiously fascinating — and never does the outside world come to touch one that it does not seem as though it had drawn me with strong cords not from any allurements in itself but from a sort of human sympathy as though the people were of interest which was irresistible . . . talked too much and was not sufficiently recollected — my fatal love of company and of being amused is a poison I cannot resist . . . I will try and get the better of my insensate love of amusing people.

A particularly bad case, a young educated woman, is brought to Duxhurst on the chance that she may be admitted. Lady Henry took her into her own cottage.

July 25

Early Mass a lovely morning. "Who forsake all." Those words make a deep dent . . . afterwards a hard day — wrote all morning — at 1 after going to the village Miss H. came and told me the story she had come to put before me. I was puzzled what to do and then I thought if we are to forsake all, our doors must be open to

all and I said yes. Afterwards I fetched her from the fields where she was waiting — poor child.

Aug. 2

The eve of my birthday and so old now, and yet I feel as I did at 18 years — at 27 I felt such years older than now. Somehow we go back by the mercy of God to our first instincts.

Nov. 22

. . . Confirmation at 5.15. The Bishop came before Church. I was terribly disappointed because he only talked about the cat, nothing seemed to interest him. I did not care for his address — he was tired — for it seemed to me very lifeless. Then I went home and he came in for a moment — the cat again — and off he went. I wonder whether men like that ever understand what a word of encouragement means to us in a life like this — but there I am ashamed of this.

Dec. 31

The end of the year . . . I dare not look forward or back, for if I look back oh how I long to undo, undo, Badminton, Eastnor, Reigate, E. London . . . Teach me Thy way help me to learn and make me understand my lesson.

Jan. 21, 1908

Baptism of Rachel's little twins.

The chapel Royal has a most unimpressive air — it always looks like a drawingroom church with the Altar a sideboard of God's plate.

The Alms dish the prominent feature so suggestive of a certain period.

The boys sang very sweetly in the quaint red uniform. The King looks older and quieter than he used. It seemed all so strange — like coming back to some other world seen from a distance in mist. The sacrament never seemed to me more impressive or more solemn. The Cross the seal of suffering the one thing so dreaded and shunned the only way to the Kingdom of Our Lord.

Monday, February 17

Came to London feeling very unwell. Meeting at Adeline's.

A dreadful meeting I never felt atmosphere so strongly — everyone was there because they were rich — and oh poor dears, poor rich!

Oct. 31

. . . A very hard day. Mrs. K. very difficult and G. still more . . . I got very much disheartened over those two first, it is so hard to bring home to people that bitterness is poison, deadly poison. Anything is possible where it does not live — nothing where it lurks.

London, Wed.

a fearful day of Committee wh. I hate more

than any other thing in work — though they were all very kind.

Thursday

Made my confession, very distracted, very poor prayers. Oh when shall I understand anything about prayer.

1909

A woman who had been condemned to death for murder and then reprieved is sent to Duxhurst on probation after her imprisonment.

Wed. 20

The newspaper men came down here — 3 in one afternoon — to get information about poor X.Y. I begged them to give her a chance of reforming and starting afresh. The Daily Mail man explained that it meant money to them if they got the news they came for. "Give it as your subscription to this place" I said and next day there was nothing in the Daily Mail. Human Nature is a beautiful thing.

London with Lady Somers Tuesday

No better — it has been another day of strain and weary waiting. She is weaker . . . the way in which the dear spirit seems to go far away is so trying to bear for those who stand and wait.

She sits bent in her bed, the head which was so erect and alert bowed — the face drawn.

May 6. The same

30 years ago the law gave me my child — the lilacs were in bloom in the Priory Garden and I watched and waited till the telegram came and then fell on my knees to thank God. Soon she came down in all her great vitality and vigour to rejoice with me.

Duxhurst, Friday

. . . fetched out of church to Mrs. N. who came back drunk — a fearful time at Hospital till midnight.

Sunday, Feb. 6

What an anniversary —. married 38 years — separated 31. I made my communion with a special intention for —. I prayed that if I were ever to come into any touch it might be in the spirit of love that suffers and is kind — that I might have some opening to say how freely I forgive.

A few years later Lady Henry, talking to an intimate friend one evening at her flat in Gray's Inn Square, said, "It's a perfect farce my saying 'Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them' because I never can remember that I have anything to forgive."

Feb.

To Paddington at midnight to see M. off to Canada. The great station room full of emigrants.

The dear human kind Salvationists helping them and cheering them.

Tuesday 19

Some wretched days of worry. Money, money, and all my own fault. I don't mind much being without it if only all could be square — I am the most wretched manager and I seem to get no better and yet I want to above all things.

F—— says it is bad to keep a journal, perhaps he is right. And yet to me I have found it an immense help because it does make me try to remember how far one's practice comes short of one's resolutions.

Sept. 11

. . . My mother's illness. I have been with her all August and daily she has taken one step nearer the river bank. Yesterday when I came up and looked into her face I think I realized for the first time the meaning of "Dying Eyes" — dear eyes so full of eagerness, so full of the love of life, dim and seeming to look out on this world with difficulty as though they must now close soon.

Sept. 29

. . . she is gone, who never failed in love, to whom I, old as I am, was as her little child, to whom I brought so much of my troubles . . . darling, darling mother.

. . . met — to arrange about my mother's

tomb and while I write the words seem a very mockery — she lying there — and every moment, “I will tell her that, — I must remember this, she will want to know it” — and then I remember the long silence till the day break.

Jan. 3, 1912 A lady is leaving the Manor House.

. . . what a terrible thing it is to let any going away make it hard to come back.

How dangerous is my terribly variable temperament — still God knows just what I am and how little worth and He will keep me steady when my poor will rocks with every blast — and I won't think about my own proclivities.

Jan. 4

Oh to have wisdom and patience and keeping a saving sense of how funny they often are.

Jan. 22

I have been horribly cross to F. How terrible it is that when the body is worn the spirit wh. should be calm should be churned up like an ugly squall. Well tomorrow will be a penance for that.

Feb. 23

. . . Another long day — very cross in the afternoon with F. and spoke as I had resolved not to — put her in the wrong so did doubly wrong.

I am so nerve worn which is all wrong and know
I am doing my work in the wrong way.

Feb. 25

. . . Then dear dear Mrs. Benson came, so dear and kind and helpful — we talked all sorts of questions and I was so deeply interested as we sat in the dark and discussed each thing that came up — what a mind so full of freshness, vigour and power — with that saving humour wh. is bubbling up at every turn.

London, March 7

Adeline came to supper and then took me to her house to hear Dr. Mott. Truly a wonderful personality and a great movement. I longed to ask him more . . . I had a few words with him and thought him very interesting and powerful. What a virility there is about the American — space is nothing to him, he has a much greater power of being really cosmopolitan than any other Nation.

Gray's Inn Square, March 12

Lambeth to lunch — Dearest Mrs. Benson more loveable and dear than ever . . .

Then I groused a little quite unnecessarily.

Lunch — many clergy. I sat next to the Archbishop. He is uninspiring — good I know and very just I think — but there is an Anglican atmosphere which is so depressing . . . Then a little more talk with Mrs. Benson. She showed

me Sargent's portrait of the Archbishop. He (Sargent) has always the Devil somewhere. "There," she said, "is the Archbishop, who has just shut up a man without convincing him." — it summed up the whole thing.

March 14

Went to lunch with — . . . I am so glad I am cut off from people — it is so wretched to think how chameleon-like I am — I become the color of the person who interests and amuses me.

March 20

Got letter from J. wh. made me think. Yes, I have been feeling ill all winter, perhaps I ought to do something definite to find out.

Lady Somers's excessive care of her daughter in her youth had had this result, — Lady Henry was reckless of her health. At this time she was so ill that a friend had forced her to see a doctor. Mr. Tate, as her diary says, was horrified at her condition and left to bring back another surgeon to second his opinion that two major operations were necessary. When Mr. Tate had left her, she rose from her bed, dressed and went out to keep an appointment. She was safe back in bed when he returned with Mr. Makin.

March 26

12.30 Mr. Tate has been he was really horrified and said he must have a second opinion.

6. oc. Mr. Makin and Mr. Tate came again, verdict operation imperative.

May 11

The morning of my operation a wonderful sunshiny morning. Kindness beyond words.

Dec. 22

Made my communion with thanksgiving, the anniversary, as each year comes round now growing to many, of my return to the sacrament of penance.

Duxburst, Jan. 2, 1913

. . . I wonder if anyone can understand how really mediocre I know myself to be. . . .

I feel after all the talk about God I must go to God that is the only safe place after talk.

Jan. 16

. . . I am wearied tonight — wearied with my wretched self — wearied with the unreality of everything and most of all with my own.

Jan. 23

Money matters very trying and unrestful. I want to do right but always seem to have managed to do wrong.

May 1

Went to Farmfield with F. Oh how terrible — what a place of despair — how senseless how foolish beyond words our Public Bodies are!

June 26

Mass — A beautiful day for Old Patients Day. What a gathering — 50 people all really doing well, happy and in their right minds.

Laus Deo.

June 30

M. left. . . .

What a fool I am can I never keep steady — am I always to be moth and candle. When she had gone I went to the church to be alone and pray and try to get back — not to get back to God for His Presence is always there — but to get a new sense of my own weakness in the Quiet of His unalterable strength.

Gray's Inn Square, Jan. 1, 1914

I made my resolutions and felt ashamed to think how elementary they are — I who look upon the setting sun who am walking down the hill of life . . . have to resolve to be more diligent, more accurate, more self denying about business — it is humbling but terribly true.

Jan. 6

. . . so poor is my mind that just the happiness of being surrounded — the excursion into other life and interest seems for the moment to put all out of proportion and drag my thoughts away from other avenues — oh what a wretched mind I have.

Jan. 10

Went to the Wonder Zoo with Adeline. A squalid performance I thought — but it was wonderful to see the power man can have over beasts and yet for the most part the beasts were so far more dignified.

Feb. 6

My wedding day 41 years ago — and 33 years since I left home one slipper on one slipper off and my hair down, in my nightgown under a cloak.

April 4

W—— came to see me I feel sometimes as if the Revolution cannot come too soon to save such men from themselves. His happiness his enjoyment his well-being, he has been carefully brought up to feel are the only things that matter.

April 5

Sermon on God is Love. If I could only feel that personally I feel all would be gained. I understand it for others but sometimes I can't believe it for myself — it seems dreadful to write this after the wonderful goodness of God — but I feel myself so short of all I could be, of all He meant me to be, it seems impossible to believe He will still have patience.

Duxhurst, August 3

God give us strength and patience and absolute submission. It was my birthday — the women

had a tea . . . but my heart was sore for the sorrow of the world.

Aug. 5

War is declared alas alas how terrible it seems, how beyond thought or grasp of any mind.

Aug. 12

I am back here now. Calm and full of sunshine and yonder, there across that thin line of sea 2 million men intent on killing each other. Oh Lord Christ give peace, the peace Thou camest to bring.

Dec. 20 and 31

The end of the year and I have missed so much . . . I cannot write — I dread writing of the war — I can only think and try to pray . . . and so ends this year — in some ways the saddest I have known — other years have been sad but then those only affected myself — this year my heart has been torn — day and night it is before me. The agony of the struggle — the wretchedness — the cold the wet the wounded and dying — but by and by perhaps we shall see with other eyes and the beautiful fruit of this harvest of sorrow will appear — the glory of the sacrifice — the wonder of the devotion to duty — the discipline — the obedience. Into Thy hands of love we commend it all.

FINIS 1914

For a time there was a Soldiers' Hospital at Duxhurst

Wed. Oct. 13

Went to Soldiers' concert — a still starry night — walked home — The telephone rang — Adeline told me a Zeppelin had been sighted and had gone citywards — I rang up S. H. it was some time before she answered — Then she spoke and said "ten minutes ago a bomb fell and your flat is wrecked."

Poor little flat where I have spent such happy hours.

Oct. 14

I went to London . . . and found chaos indescribable — everyone out in the Gardens to see the rent wall and poor flapping curtains — stained and torn hanging out of the windows — all the glass and frames blown in and ruin — ruin — everywhere — but what are these things in comparison to the suffering and death in other places.

January 4, 1916

. . . at 10 I started for Kingston Qr. Sessions, I went into the marble halls of this Palace of Justice, and waited there for 3 hours with such a crowd — men with the hall mark of sin on their poor faces — costers, drovers, shopmen, women, many in tears, wives, mothers,

What a hall of horror.

I waited on and on for the time when I could get in my say for that miserable little woman. At last it came. I was shown up into the witness box and sworn in and questioned. "Is it kleptomania?" said the Chief Magistrate. "It would be called so if she were a rich woman, but as she is a poor woman it must be called theft," I ventured to say, and then I did what I could.

Nov. 19

I saw Mr. ——— today. It is so difficult to separate his real love of the Church from a business man's love of a "Going Concern."

Nov. 23

I am so afraid of living alone. I may get to think my own troubles always the only ones. It is a danger.

London, Dec. 14

A very depressing interview with Mrs. ——— I could see it all. D——'s insulting ways. A's crushing pessimism, and the humiliation of it all is sometimes overwhelming. Until I remember "Who Himself bare" — that all that can be known of humiliation, as different in degree and quality as a planet from a farthing dip is known to Him.

June 16 1917

The thing which has broken the routine for me

has been Blanche Somerset's wedding. For the first time for 39 yrs I have been among them again . . . I felt like a spirit come back. Worcester giving his daughter in marriage. Not much changed, older, bent, more like his Father, but still the same as in old days. The only one of that splendid band of tall men who used to come trooping down the stairs after their Father. The children of the people I had known reigned in their stead. It seemed as though I had just this glimpse of the old world to make me see how good for me it was I should have been taken from it—pleasure loving, ease loving, loving to be loved. How good God had been to snap the cord that bound me to so much that for me was dangerous.

Oct. 10

Went to hear Lord Grey on the League of Nations . . . in the Central Hall Westminster. I have hardly ever been in such a crush, it was alarming, abominably managed and really dangerous. Lord Grey spoke well, his tone was so moderate and so practical. He was in dead earnest and so was his audience. It seemed to me as I sat there the foundations were being laid for something on which the future world will build, after these years of torture, after ages of suffering. Some better way will be found to make the world secure from aggression and tyranny and injustice.

Dec. 20, 1919

I have had a time of much care and worry . . . money, money, always seems the dull refrain . . . the abiding feeling — it is my own fault, my bad management — turns everything to bitterness.

New Year's Eve.

All the unknown ahead, all the dangers and delights and difficulties, and the joys, and God above it all and our safety in Him.

In April her sister Adeline died.

1920

April 22

All April Adeline was ailing . . . doctor said no cause for alarm . . . The days went on and she grew weaker although I never dreamed of danger. One day, I forget which, the whole seems like a long dream, she fainted. The specialist came and said if she had another syncope she could not recover.

When I went to her, she said "You will look after my soul, the nurses will look after my body, promise me I shall have the last Sacraments." I hardly knew how to answer but I promised.

At midnight F·H came with the Blessed Sacrament. It seemed so strange actually to be living through the fact of her Viaticum.

Duchess Adeline died late next night.

Of that night I cannot write . . . the loneliness seemed almost unendurable.

* * * * *

With her sister's death always in her mind she was still interested in life, and still so young at heart, that passing the shop where her tulle ball dresses had been made nearly fifty years ago, she would stop, "not to buy anything," she would explain, "but just to look at the new things you have brought back from Paris." The clothes young girls were wearing interested her most, the pretty dance frocks so unlike the fashions of her youth.

"This life is such a tiny part of a great whole," she had written at the back of an old diary, "we cannot hope to solve the riddle of life. We must never think we cannot hold two inconsistent views."

Her own death, now very near for her, since her sister had gone, and the prettiness of a girl's ball dress were two thoughts she could hold quite easily in her mind.

In March, 1921, after two days illness, she died.

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